

H O M E R.

*London: Published as the Act directs. March 26, 1796. by T. Longman, &c.*



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THE  
ILIAD  
OF  
HOMER.

TRANSLATED BY  
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

TE SEQUOR, O GRAE GENTIS DECUS! INQUE TUIS NUNC  
FIXA PEDUM PONO PRESSIS VESTIGIA SIGNIS:  
NON ITA CERTANDI CUPIDUS, QUAM PROPTER AMOREM,  
QUOD TE IMITARI AVEO. LUCRET.

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A NEW EDITION,

WITH ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES, SELECTED FROM THE EDITION PUBLISHED

By GILBERT WAKEFIELD, B. A.

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VOLUME I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON; J. NICHOLS AND SON; G. AND W. NICOL; W. CLARKE AND SONS; J. CUTHELL; J. NUNN; G. WILKIE; LACKINGTON AND CO.; CARPENTER AND SON; J. OTRIDGE; J. AND A. ARCH; LONGMAN AND CO.; CADELL AND DAVIES; J. RICHARDSON; J. M. RICHARDSON; LAW AND WHITTAKER; J. MAWMAN; J. BOOKER; E. WILLIAMS; J. BLACK AND SON; BALDWIN AND CO.; GALE AND FENNER; T. HAMILTON; WALKER AND EDWARDS; AND W. H. REID,

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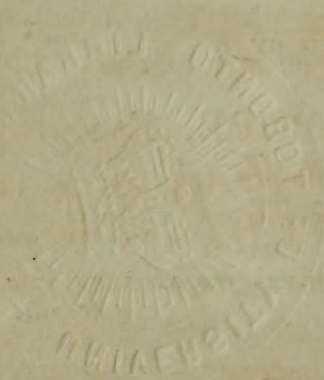
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THE

ILLAD

OF

HOMER



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ADVERTISEMENT  
TO  
THE PRESENT EDITION.

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THE transcendent merit of Homer has been displayed, with such fullness and consummate elegance, by Pope, in the prefatory essay, and in the dissertations and notes, to his version of the Iliad, that it would be equally unnecessary and presumptuous for the Editor of this edition to add a single word upon the subject. He will not, rashly and without any beneficial end, endeavour to draw the bow of Ulysses. Nor is it necessary for him to say more with respect to the merit of the translator, than of the great original, from which that translator copied. In spite of those imperfections, which are undoubtedly to be found in it, and which, as undoubtedly, are to be found in all human works, the translation of Homer, by Pope, will never cease to be considered as a splendid monument of talent; which other translators may laudably hope to rival, but which they can never hope to surpass. Its faults, of omission and mistake, are amply atoned for by the high poetic spirit, the felicity of diction, and the pomp of numbers, with which every page, and indeed almost every line, is animated and adorned.

The sole task, therefore, that remains to be performed, is, to state what have been the humble labours of the present editor. It has been his wish to give to the Public an

edition of Pope's Homer, which should be at once elegant in appearance, and convenient in size ; which, while it contained all such comments as are requisite to elucidate the text, and satisfy the mere English reader, should not be rendered too voluminous, and consequently cumbersome and partly useless, by a redundancy of illustration.

The ground-work of this edition is that which was edited, in nine volumes octavo, by the late Reverend Gilbert Wakefield. His edition is prefaced by remarks, which evince much critical penetration, and, at the same time, much candour ; and clearly prove that Pope did not possess an extensive knowledge of the Greek tongue. In the body of his work, Mr. Wakefield has retained all the notes written by Pope and Broome ; and has himself made a large addition to them. His notes, however, chiefly consist of parallel passages ; corrections of mistakes made, by the translator, in the meaning of Homer ; attempts, generally not unworthy of praise, to produce a more faithful version ; and, lastly, incessant and bitter censure of defective rhymes. With regard to rhyme, such was the diseased niceness of his ear, that he could not tolerate even the best of those imperfect rhymes, the use of which has been sanctioned by every one of our most eminent poets.

As the edition, which is now laid before the Public, is principally designed for those who are not acquainted with the Greek, great care has been taken to select only such parts, and yet to select all such parts, of the Commentary of Pope and Wakefield, as may be useful to an English reader. The prefatory essay on Homer, the dissertations, and the preliminary notes, are, of course, reprinted, as being indispensably requisite. Neither, for various reasons, could Mr.



Wakefield's opening remarks be, with propriety, omitted. Of the notes, all those which relate solely to critical or conjectural disquisition, or which are intended to point out the numerous beauties of the Grecian Bard, are rejected, as being rather curious and amusive, than of real utility. But, on the other hand, it is hoped that the Editor will be found to have retained every thing which can throw a light on the laws, the customs, the manners, the characters, the historical facts, and the sciences and arts, which are mentioned, or alluded to, in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Perhaps it may, with truth, be objected that he has not retained too little, but too much. In elucidating it is, however, certainly better to err on the side of prolixity than of conciseness.

There is still another class of notes, on which it may be proper to say a few words. This class consists of the notes which contain Mr. Wakefield's corrections of the version of Pope. Wherever it appeared, as it sometimes did appear, that the former was anxious only to try his poetical strength with the latter, the note has been discarded, without hesitation. But, wherever it was obvious that the sense had been mistaken, or that a beauty had been passed over or disfigured, by the original translator, the lines of Mr. Wakefield have been preserved; in order to enable the reader to see the true sense of Homer, without being compelled to seek for it in some other translation.

With the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the Editor has reprinted the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, translated by Parnell; and, that this edition may contain all of Homer that has received an English dress, he has been induced to add the *Hymn to Ceres*: of which the translation was, several years

ago, published, in a separate pamphlet, by the late Reverend Richard Hole.

It is hoped that this edition is more typographically correct than many of the preceding editions. This merit, merely mechanical as it is, will not be despised by those who remember, that the change of a word, or even of a letter, especially in poetry, will often give a ludicrous air to the most sublime or the most pathetic description; and that nothing is more fatal than ridicule to those feelings which sublimity and pathos are intended to excite.

## PREFACE.

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**HOMER** is universally allowed to have had the greatest *Invention* of any writer whatever. The praise of judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, and others may have their pretensions as to particular excellencies; but his *Invention* remains yet unrivalled. Nor is it a wonder if he has ever been acknowledged the greatest of poets who most excelled in that which is the very foundation of poetry. It is the *Invention* that in different degrees distinguishes all great Geniuses; the utmost stretch of human study, learning, and industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes Art with all her materials, and without it Judgment itself can at best but *steal wisely*: for Art is only like a prudent steward that lives on managing the riches of Nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them to which the *Invention* must not contribute\*: as in the most regular gardens, Art can

\* The passage stood thus in the first edition:—there is not even a single beauty in them *but is owing to the invention*: as in the most regular gardens, *however Art may carry the greatest appearance, there is not a plant or flower but is the gift of Nature.*



only reduce the beauties of Nature to more regularity, and such a figure, which the common eye may better take in, and is therefore more entertained with. And perhaps the reason why common criticks are inclined to prefer a judicious and methodical genius to a great and fruitful one is, because they find it easier for themselves to pursue their observations through an uniform and bounded walk of Art, than to comprehend the vast and various extent of Nature.

Our author's work is a wild paradise, where if we cannot see all the beauties so distinctly as in an ordered Garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. It is like a copious nursery, which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind, out of which those who followed him have but selected some particular plants, each according to his fancy, to cultivate and beautify. If some things are too luxuriant, it is owing to the richness of the soil \*; and if others are not arrived to perfection or

*The first can only reduce the beauties of the latter into a more obvious figure, which the common eye——.*

This observation may appear to savour of satirical censoriousness, but I believe it to be extremely just. That wild and exuberant genius, Dryden, has been of late years much undervalued amidst the public admiration of more regular and chastised writers; but has invariably commanded the veneration of consummate judges. See Dr. Johnson's incomparable parallel of him and our poet in the life of Pope, and letter li. in the 4th section of Gray's Memoirs by Mason. W.

\* Quod, ut vitium est, ita copiae vitium: "Which, though it be a fault, is the fault of innate fertility," says Quintilian: an author, with whom our poet appears, no less from this preface,



maturity, it is only because they are over-run and opprest by those of a stronger nature.

It is to the strength of this amazing invention we are to attribute that unequalled fire and rapture, which is so forcible in Homer that no man of a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. What he writes is of the most animated nature imaginable; every thing moves, every thing lives, and is put in action. If a council be called, or a battle fought, you are not coldly informed of what was said or done as from a third person; the reader is hurried out of himself by the force of the Poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a hearer, in another to a spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the army he describes,

Οἱ δ' ἀρ' ἴσαν, ὥς τε πυρὶ χθὼν πάντα νέμοιτο.

*They pour along like a fire that sweeps the whole earth before it* \*. It is however remarkable that his

than from his Essay on Criticism, to have cultivated an attachment. W.

\* This is a very inadequate representation of the Greek verse, which occurs in Iliad ii. ver. 780. Under a previous solicitation of the reader's indulgence, I shall attempt a more exact resemblance :

With wasting fury, as a flood of flame

Rolls o'er the ground it's waves, the squadrons came.

In my apprehension, the leading impressions of Homer's comparison are "the vigour, the compactness, and formidable aspect of this moving host:" and the peculiar image of fire naturally directs our attention to the refulgence of their armour; so that this circumstance had probably a place also in the intention of the poet. W.

fancy, which is every where vigorous, is not discovered immediately at the beginning of his poem in its fullest splendor: it grows in the progress both upon himself and others, and becomes on fire like a chariot-wheel, by its own rapidity. Exact disposition, just thought, correct elocution, polished numbers, may have been found in a thousand; but this poetical fire, this *Vivida vis animi*, in a very few. Even in works where all those are imperfect or neglected, this can over-power criticism, and make us admire even while we disapprove. Nay, where this appears, though attended with absurdities, it brightens all the rubbish about it, till we see nothing but its own splendor. This *Fire* is discerned in Virgil, but discerned as through a glass, reflected from Homer, more shining than fierce\*, but every where equal and constant: in Lucan and Statius, it bursts out in sudden, short, and interrupted flashes: in Milton it glows like a furnace kept up to an uncommon ardor† by the force of art: in Shakespear, it strikes before

\* In the first edition, with less elegance he wrote, *And* more shining than *warm*. The improvement might be suggested by a verse in Prior's *Lady's Looking-Glass* :

The setting sun adorn'd the coast,  
His beams intire, his *fierceness* lost.

In much the same spirit Longinus, Sect. ix. says of Homer: "So that in his *Odyssey* we may compare Homer to the setting sun, whose magnitude continues without his fierceness." W.

† Altered from the "uncommon *fierceness*" of the first edition, for an obvious reason. W.



we are aware, like an accidental fire from heaven : but in Homer, and in him only, it burns every where clearly, and every where irresistibly.

I shall here endeavour to show, how this vast *Invention* exerts itself in a manner superior to that of any poet, through all the main constituent parts of his work, as it is the great and peculiar characteristic which distinguishes him from all authors.

This strong and ruling faculty was like a powerful *star*\*, which, in the violence of its course, drew all things within its *vortex*. It seemed not enough to have taken in the whole circle of arts, and the whole compass of nature, to supply his maxims and reflections†; all the inward passions and affections of mankind, to furnish his characters; and all the outward forms and images of things for his descriptions; but wanting yet an ampler sphere to expatiate in, he opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, and created a world for himself in the invention of *Fable*. That which Aristotle calls the *Soul of poetry* was breathed into it by Homer‡.

\* Star: in the first edition, planet; and altered without reason, probably at the instigation of some friend, pretending to more philosophy than he posset: for the Cartesian hypothesis presumed, that the *planets* were borne along by *vortices*; the secondary round the primary, and the primary round the sun. W.

† To supply his maxims and reflections.] This clause was super-added to the first edition; and furnish, in the next sentence, substituted for supply. W.

‡ This is elegantly expressed; but Aristotle's words are these: Αρχη μιν εν και οιον ψυχη ο μυθος της τραγωδιας, δευτερον δε τα ηθη: Poët.

I shall begin with considering him in this part, as it is naturally the first, and I speak of it both as it means the design of a poem, and as it is taken for fiction.

Fable may be divided into the *probable*, the *allegorical*, and the *marvellous*. The *probable fable* is the recital of such actions as, though they did not happen, yet might, in the common course of nature : or of such as, though they did, become fables by the additional episodes and manner of telling them. Of this sort is the main story of an Epic poem, *the return of Ulysses, the settlement of the Trojans in Italy*, or the like. That of the Iliad is the *anger of Achilles*, the most short and single subject that ever was chosen by any Poet. Yet this he has supplied with a vaster variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils, speeches, battles, and episodes of all kinds, than are to be found even in those poems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for want of so warm a genius, aided himself by taking in a more extensive subject, as well as a greater length of time, and contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his. The other epic poets have used the

cap. ૫૭. "The fable is the foundation, and as it were the soul, of Tragedy : next the Morals." W.



same practice, but generally carried it so far as to superinduce a multiplicity of fables, destroy the unity of action, and lose their readers in an unreasonable length of time. Nor is it only in the main design that they have been unable to add to his invention \*, but they have followed him in every episode and part of the story. If he has given a regular *catalogue* of an *army*, they all draw up their forces in the same order. If he has funeral games for Patroclus, Virgil has the same for Anchises, and Statius (rather than omit them) destroys the unity of his action for those of Archemorus. If Ulysses visit the shades, the Æneas of Virgil and Scipio of Silius are sent after him. If he be detained from his return by the allurements of Calypso, so is Æneas by Dido, and Rinaldo by Armida. If Achilles be absent from the army on the score of a quarrel through half the poem, Rinaldo must absent himself just as long, on the like account. If he gives his hero a suit of celestial armour, Virgil and Tasso make the same present to theirs. Virgil has not only observed this close imitation of Homer, but where he had not

\* This uniform traditionary decision of the critics may be reasonably called in question, from a very obvious and indisputable principle: What has once acquired the general applause and admiration of mankind, renders a material departure from it's plan extremely hazardous, and insecure of public approbation. Passive acquiescence, therefore, may spring from timidity, as well as from defect of genius. It may be true then, that Homer's plan is best, and even perfect: but the scarcity of variation from it may evidently be occasioned by the motives now alleged. W.

led the way, supplied the want from other Greek authors. Thus the story of Sinon and the taking of Troy was copied (says Macrobius) almost word for word from Pisander, as the loves of Dido and Æneas are taken from those of Medea and Jason in Apollonius, and several others in the same manner.

To proceed to the *allegorical fable*: If we reflect upon those innumerable knowledges, those secrets of nature and physical philosophy, which Homer is generally supposed to have wrapped up in his *allegories*, what a new and ample scene of wonder may this consideration afford us? How fertile will that imagination appear, which was able to clothe all the properties of elements, the qualifications of the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons; and to introduce them into actions agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed? This is a field in which no succeeding poets could dispute with Homer; and whatever commendations have been allowed them on this head, are by no means for their invention in having enlarged his circle, but for their judgment in having contracted it. For when the mode of learning changed in following ages, and science was delivered in a plainer manner, it then became as reasonable in the more modern poets to lay it aside, as it was in Homer to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy circumstance for Virgil, that there was not in his time that demand



upon him of so great an invention, as might be capable of furnishing all those allegorical parts of a poem.

The *marvellous fable* includes whatever is supernatural, and especially the machines of the Gods. If Homer was not the first who introduced the Deities (as Herodotus imagines) into the religion of Greece, he seems the first who brought them into a system of machinery for poetry, and such a one as makes its greatest importance and dignity. For we find those authors who have been offended at the literal notion of the Gods, constantly laying their accusation against Homer as the chief support of it\*. But whatever cause there might be to blame his *machines* in a philosophical or religious view, they are so perfect in the poetic, that mankind have been ever since contented to follow them: none have been able to enlarge the sphere of poetry beyond the limits he has set: every attempt of this nature has proved unsuccessful; and after all the various changes of times and religions, his Gods continue to this day the Gods of poetry.

We come now to the *characters* of his persons, and here we shall find no author has ever drawn so many, with so visible and surprising a variety, or given us such lively and affecting impressions of them. Every one has something so singularly his own, that no

\* It stood in the first edition, with less precision; "as the  
"undoubted inventor of them."  
W.



painter could have distinguished them more by their features, than the Poet has by their manners. Nothing can be more exact than the distinctions he has observed in the different degrees of virtues and vices. The single quality of *courage* is wonderfully diversified in the several characters of the Iliad. That of Achilles is furious and intractable; that of Diomede forward, yet listening to advice and subject to command: that \* of Ajax is heavy and self-confiding; of Hector, active and vigilant; the courage of Agamemnon is inspirited by love of empire and ambition; that of Menelaüs mixed with softness and tenderness for his people: we find in Idomeneus a plain direct soldier; in Sarpedon a gallant and generous one. Nor is this judicious and astonishing diversity to be found only in the principal quality which constitutes the main of each character, but even in the underparts of it, to which he takes care to give a tincture of that principal one. For example, the main characters of Ulysses and Nestor consist in *wisdom*; and they are distinct in this, that the wisdom of one is *artificial* and *various*, of the other *natural*, *open*, and *regular*. But they have, besides, characters of *courage*; and this quality also takes a different turn in each from the difference of his

\* This sentence stood thus in the first edition :

“ We see in Ajax an heavy and self confiding valour, in Hector  
“ an active and vigilant one:”—but was justly changed for the  
benefit of a more uniform construction, and compacter phraseology.

prudence: for one in the war depends still upon *caution*, the other upon *experience*. It would be endless to produce instances of these kinds. The characters of Virgil are far from striking us in this open manner; they lie in a great degree hidden and undistinguished, and where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. His characters of valour are much alike; even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar but as it is in a superior degree; and we see nothing that differences the courage of Mnestheus from that of Sergesthus, Cloanthus, or the rest. - In like manner it may be remarked of Statius's heroes, that an air of impetuosity runs through them all; the same horrid and savage courage appears in his Capaneus, Tydeus, Hippomedon, &c. They have a parity of character which makes them seem brothers of one family. I believe when the reader is led into this track of reflection, if he will pursue it through the *Epic* and *Tragic* writers, he will be convinced how infinitely superior in this point the invention of Homer was to that of all others.

The *speeches* are to be considered as they flow from the characters, being perfect or defective as they agree or disagree with the manners of those who utter them. As there is more variety of characters in the *Iliad*, so there is of speeches, than in any other poem. *Every thing in it has manners* (as Aristotle expresses it) that is, every thing is acted



or spoken. It is hardly credible in a work of such length, how small a number of lines are employed in narration. In Virgil the dramatic part is less in proportion to the narrative; and the speeches often consist of general reflections or thoughts, which might be equally just in any person's mouth upon the same occasion. As many of his persons have no apparent characters, so many of his speeches escape being applied and judged by the rule of propriety. We oftener think of the author himself when we read Virgil, than when we are engaged in Homer: all which are the effects of a colder invention\*, that interests us less in the action described: Homer makes us hearers, and Virgil leaves us readers.

If in the next place we take a view of the *sentiments*, the same presiding faculty is eminent in the sublimity and spirit of his thoughts. Longinus has given his opinion, that it was in this part Homer principally excelled†. What were alone sufficient to

\* Which is shewn by an inability to delineate characters of sufficient diversity, and to preserve, on every occasion, an appropriate discrimination of the same characters in their speeches and their actions. W.

† I was tolerably certain, as I recollected no specific declaration of this kind in Longinus, that it must be found in his 9th section. That I explored in vain; when, upon having recourse to Boileau, through whose version only it is highly probable Longinus was known to Pope, I perceived a gap in that section, to be thus smoothed and filled up by the French poet; “*Et c'est en cette partie qu' il principalement excellé Homere, dont les pensées sont toutes sublimes.*” And doubtless a perusal of Boileau's translation and notes would lead to other discoveries of this kind. W.



prove the grandeur and excellence of his sentiments in general is, that they have so remarkable a parity with those of the scripture: Duport, in his *Gnomologica Homerica*, has collected innumerable instances of this sort. And it is with justice an excellent modern writer\* allows, that if Virgil has not so many thoughts that are low and vulgar, he has not so many that are sublime and noble; and that the Roman author seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments where he is not fired by the *Iliad*.

If we observe his *descriptions*, *images*, and *similes*, we shall find the invention still predominant. To what else can we ascribe that vast comprehension of images of every sort, where we see each circumstance of art† and individual of nature summoned together, by the extent and fecundity of his imagination; to which all things, in their various views, presented themselves in an instant, and had their impressions taken off to perfection, at a heat? Nay, he not only gives us the full prospects of things, but several unexpected peculiarities and side-views, unobserved by any painter but Homer. Nothing is so surpris-

\* Probably Addison, but I am unable to point out the passage: from this topic, however, Quintilian derives this consolation in behalf of his countryman; book x. chap. 1. *Quantum eminentioribus vincimur, fortasse æqualitate pensamus*: “And, perhaps, Virgil “compensates his inferiority to Homer in the elevations of “poetry, by his evenness of excellence.” W.

† *Of art*. These words are not found in the first edition. W.

ing as the descriptions of his battles, which take up no less than half the Iliad, and are supplied with so vast a variety of incidents that no one bears a likeness to another; such different kinds of deaths, that no two heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble ideas, that every battle rises above the last in greatness, horror, and confusion. It is certain there is not near that number of images and descriptions in any Epic Poet; though every one has assisted himself with a great quantity out of him: and it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any comparisons which are not drawn from his master\*.

If we descend from hence to the *expression*, we see the bright imagination of Homer shining out in the most enlivened forms of it. We acknowledge him the father of poetical diction, the first who taught that *language of the Gods* to men. His expression is like the colouring of some great masters, which discovers itself to be laid on boldly, and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touched with the greatest spirit. Aristotle had reason to say, He was the only poet who had found out *living*

\* This, however, is a consequence, unconnected with sterility of invention, and inevitably incident to succeeding writers. The face of Nature is much the same in every age and in every position: the more prominent and striking peculiarities uniformly present themselves to every observer, and become of course the property of the prior occupant. W.



*words*\*; there are in him more daring figures and metaphors than in any good author whatever. An arrow is *impatient* to be on the wing, a weapon *thirsts* to drink the blood of an enemy, and the like. Yet his expression is never too big for the sense, but justly great in proportion to it. It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: and in the same degree that a thought is warmer, an expression will be brighter; as that is more strong, this will become more perspicuous: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude and refines to a greater clearness, only as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.

To throw his language more out of prose, Homer seems to have affected the *compound-epithets*†. This was a sort of composition peculiarly proper to

\* From what source our author drew this intelligence, I have not discovered. His informant might have in view Aristotle's rhetoric; iii. 11. where that philosopher expresses himself thus: "Homer, by a metaphor, often speaks of inanimate things as "endued with life; and is very happy in that energy, which he "displays by these means, on every occasion." Then, after various instances, such as "the arrow *flew*;" and, "the point "rusht *eagerly* through his breast;" he adds: "These expressions "owe their energy to the *life* which is given them."

After Aristotle, Horace has *vivas voces*, *living words*, in his Epistle to the Pisoes, ver. 317. W.

† Our own language is not much inferior to the Greek in the facility and felicity of these combinations. Milton and Gray have exhibited some of the finest specimens of such *compound epithets*.

W.



poetry, not only as it heightened the *diction*, but as it assisted and filled the *numbers* with greater sound and pomp, and likewise conduced in some measure to thicken the *images*. On this last consideration I cannot but attribute these also to the fruitfulness of his invention, since (as he has managed them) they are a sort of supernumerary pictures of the persons or things to which they are joined\*. We see the motion of Hector's plumes in the epithet Κορυθαίολος, the landscape of Mount Neritus in that of Εἰνοσίφυλλος, and so of others; which particular images could not have been insisted upon so long as to express them in a description (though but of a single line) without diverting the reader too much from the principal action or figure. As a metaphor is a short simile, one of these epithets is a short description.

Lastly, if we consider his *versification*, we shall be sensible what a share of praise is due to his invention in that also. He was not satisfied with his language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but searching through its differing *dialects* with this particular view, to beautify and perfect his

\* This conclusion was judiciously altered from the colloquial vulgarity of the first edition:—"The persons or things *they are joined to.*" In general, our author's prose composition is too loose and straggling, too much broken with diminutive and feeble words, not well connected and consolidated: it wants energy, concentration, and rotundity. Otherwise, his conceptions are clear, his diction appropriate, his figures numerous and splendid, amidst an unaffected purity of phrase, like constellations in a winter's sky. W.

numbers: he considered these as they had a greater mixture of vowels or consonants, and accordingly employed them as the verse required either a greater smoothness or strength. What he most affected was the Ionic, which has a peculiar sweetness from its never using contractions, and from its custom of resolving the diphthongs into two syllables, so as to make the words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous fluency. With this he mingled the Attic contractions, the broader Doric, and the feebler Æolic, which often rejects its aspirate, or takes off its accent; and completed this variety by altering some letters with the licence of poetry. Thus his measures, instead of being fetters to his sense, were always in readiness to run along with the warmth of his rapture, and even to give a farther representation of his notions, in the correspondence of their sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that harmony, which makes us confess he had not only the richest head, but the finest ear in the world. This is so great a truth, that whoever will but consult the tune of his verses, even without understanding them (with the same sort of diligence as we daily see practised in the case of Italian Operas), will find more sweetness, variety, and majesty of sound, than in any other language or poetry. The beauty of his numbers is allowed by the criticks to be copied but faintly by Virgil himself, though they are so just to ascribe it to the nature of



the Latin tongue: indeed the Greek has some advantages both from the natural *sound* of its *words*, and the turn and *cadence* of its *Verse*, which agree with the genius of no other language. Virgil was very sensible of this, and used the utmost diligence in working up a more intractable language to whatsoever graces it was capable of; and in particular never failed to bring the sound of his line to a beautiful agreement with its sense. If the Grecian poet has not been so frequently celebrated on this account as the Roman, the only reason is, that fewer critics have understood one language than the other. Dionysius of Halicarnassus has pointed out many of our author's beauties in this kind, in his treatise of the *Composition of Words*\*, and others will be taken notice of in the course of my notes. It suffices at present to observe of his numbers, that they flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine Homer had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the Muses dictated; and at the same time with so much force and inspiriting vigour, that they awaken and raise us like the sound of a trumpet. They roll along as a plentiful river, always in motion, and always full; while we are borne away by a tide of verse, the most rapid, and yet the most smooth imaginable.

Thus on whatever side we contemplate Homer,

\* See the 15th and 16th sections of that Treatise. W.



what principally strikes us is his *invention*. It is that which forms the character of each part of his work; and accordingly we find it to have made his fable more *extensive* and *copious* than any other, his manners more *lively* and *strongly marked*, his speeches more *affecting* and *transported*, his sentiments more *warm* and *sublime*, his images and descriptions more *full* and *animated*, his expression more *raised* and *daring*, and his numbers more *rapid* and *various*. I hope, in what has been said of Virgil, with regard to any of these heads, I have no way derogated from his character. Nothing is more absurd or endless, than the common method of comparing eminent writers by an opposition of particular passages in them, and forming a judgment from thence of their merit upon the whole. We ought to have a certain knowledge of the principal character and distinguishing excellence of each: it is in *that* we are to consider him, and in proportion to his degree in *that* we are to admire him. No author or man ever excelled all the world in more than one faculty, and as Homer has done this in *invention*, Virgil has in *judgment*. Not that we are to think Homer wanted judgment, because Virgil had it in a more eminent degree; or that Virgil wanted invention, because Homer possess a larger share of it: each of these great authors had more of both than perhaps any man besides, and are only said to have less in comparison with one another.

Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist. In one we most admire the man, in the other the work. Homer hurries and transports us with a commanding impetuosity, Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty: Homer scatters with a generous profusion, Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence: Homer, like the Nile, pours out his riches with a boundless overflow\*; Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a gentle and constant stream. When we behold their battles, methinks the two Poets resemble the Heroes they celebrate: Homer, boundless and irresistible as Achilles, bears all before him, and shines more and more as the tumult increases; Virgil, calmly daring like Æneas, appears undisturbed in the midst of the action; disposes all about him, and conquers with tranquillity. And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors, shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the Heavens; Virgil, like the same power in his benevolence, counselling with the Gods, laying plans for empires, and regularly ordering his whole creation†.

\* He gave, in the first edition, "With a *sudden* overflow:" which suited Homer as well, but not the Nile; and was therefore judiciously supplanted for the present reading. W.

† This contrast of Homer and Virgil by our poet, that of Demosthenes and Cicero by Quintilian, and that of Dryden and Pope (constructed on those of his predecessors) by Dr. Johnson, particularly the latter, in fertility of thought, elegance of figure,



But after all, it is with great parts as with great virtues, they naturally border on some imperfection; and it is often hard to distinguish exactly where the virtue ends, or the fault begins. As prudence may sometimes sink to suspicion, so may a great judgment decline to coldness; and as magnanimity may run up to profusion or extravagance, so may a great invention to redundancy or wildness. If we look upon Homer in this view, we shall perceive the chief *objections* against him to proceed from so noble a cause as the excess of this faculty.

Among these we may reckon some of his *marvellous fictions*, upon which so much criticism has been spent, as surpassing all the bounds of probability. Perhaps it may be with great and superior souls as with gigantick bodies, which, exerting themselves with unusual strength, exceed what is commonly thought the due proportion of parts, to become miracles in the whole; and, like the old heroes of that make, commit something near extravagance, amidst a series of glorious and inimitable performances. Thus Homer has his *speaking horses*, and Virgil his *myrtles distilling blood*, where the latter has not so much as contrived the easy intervention of a Deity to save the probability.

energetic pregnancy of expression, and justness of application, may be ranked, in my opinion, among the noblest and most vigorous efforts of critical ingenuity.

W.



It is owing to the same vast invention, that his *Similes* have been thought too exuberant, and full of circumstances. The force of this faculty is seen in nothing more, than in its inability to confine itself to that single circumstance upon which the comparison is grounded: it runs out into embellishments of additional images, which however are so managed as not to overpower the main one. His similes are like pictures, where the principal figure has not only its proportion given agreeable to the original, but is also set off with occasional ornaments and prospects. The same will account for his manner of heaping a number of comparisons together in one breath, when his fancy suggested to him at once so many various and correspondent images. The reader will easily extend this observation to more objections of the same kind.

If there are others which seem rather to charge him with a defect or narrowness of genius than an excess of it, those seeming defects will be found upon examination to proceed wholly from the nature of the times he lived in. Such are his *grosser representations* of the *Gods*, and the vicious and *imperfect manners* of his Heroes, which will be treated of in the following\* *Essay*: but I must here speak a word of the latter, as it is a point

\* See the Articles of Theology and Morality, in the third part of the Essay.

generally carried into extremes, both by the censurers and defenders of Homer. It must be a strange partiality to antiquity, to think with Madam Dacier “\* that those times and manners are so much “the more excellent, as they are contrary to ours.” Who can be so prejudiced in their favour as to magnify the felicity of those ages, when a spirit of revenge and cruelty, joined with the practice of rapine and robbery, reigned through the world; when no mercy was shown but for the sake of lucre, when the greatest Princes were put to the sword, and their wives and daughters made slaves and concubines? On the other side, I would not be so delicate as those modern criticks, who are shocked at the *servile offices* and mean employments in which we sometimes see the Heroes of Homer engaged. There is a pleasure in taking a view of that simplicity in opposition to the luxury of succeeding ages†, in beholding Monarchs without their guards, Princes tending their flocks, and Princesses drawing water from the springs. When we read Homer, we ought to reflect that we are reading the most ancient author in the heathen

\* Preface to her Homer.

† After this explicit declaration, on which he has elsewhere insisted also, and with this rectitude of judgment, it is the more surprising, that he should have taken so much pains in the course of his translation, as I have occasionally noticed, to efface these traces of simplicity in his author, and to obscure the distinct lineaments of ancient manners by the varnish of adventitious embellishment and modernised phraseology. W.



world ; and those who consider him in this light, will double their pleasure in the perusal of him. Let them think they are growing acquainted with nations and people that are now no more ; that they are stepping almost three thousand years back into the remotest Antiquity, and entertaining themselves with a clear and surprising vision of things no where else to be found, the only true mirror\* of that ancient world. By this means alone their greatest obstacles will vanish ; and what usually creates their dislike will become a satisfaction.

This consideration may farther serve to answer for the constant use of the same *epithets* to his Gods and Heroes, such as the *far-darting* Phœbus, the *blue-eyed* Pallas, the *swift-footed* Achilles, &c. which some have censured as impertinent and tediously repeated. Those of the Gods depended upon the powers and offices then believed to belong to them, and had contracted a weight and veneration from the rites and solemn devotions in which they were used : they were a sort of attributes with which it was a matter of religion to salute them on all occasions, and which it was an irreverence to omit †. As for the epithets of

\* An improvement on the comparison of the first edition :—  
“ and the only *authentick picture* of that ancient world.” W.

† The former clause of this sentence is altered for the better from the first edition, and the latter for the worse by an interpolation of useless words. It stood thus originally : “ They were a sort of Attributes *that* it was a matter of religion to salute them with on all occasions, and an irreverence to omit.” W.



great men, Mons. Boileau is of opinion, that they were in the nature of *Surnames*, and repeated as such; for the Greeks having no names derived from their fathers, were obliged \* to add some other distinction of each person; either naming his parents expressly, or his place of birth, profession, or the like: as Alexander the son of Philip, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Diogenes the Cynic, &c. Homer therefore, complying with the custom of his country, used such distinctive additions as better agreed with poetry. And indeed we have something parallel to these in modern times, such as the names of Harold Harefoot, Edmund Ironside, Edward Long-shanks, Edward the Black Prince, &c. If yet this be thought to account better for the propriety than for the repetition, I shall add a farther conjecture. Hesiod, dividing the world into its different ages, has placed a fourth age between the brazen and the iron one, of *Heroes distinct from other men: a divine race, who fought at Thebes and Troy, are called Demi-gods, and live by the care of Jupiter in the islands of the blessed* †. Now among the divine honours which were paid them, they might have this also in common with the Gods, not to be mentioned without the solemnity of an epithet, and such as might be accept-

\* After this word, in the first edition, followed the clause, "when they mentioned any one." W.

† Hesiod, lib. 1. ver. 155, &c.

able to them by its celebrating their families, actions, or qualities.

What other cavils have been raised against Homer are such as hardly deserve a reply, but will yet be taken notice of as they occur in the course of the work. Many have been occasioned by an injudicious endeavour to exalt Virgil; which is much the same, as if one should think to raise the superstructure by undermining the foundation: one would imagine by the whole course of their parallels, that these criticks never so much as heard of Homer's having written first; a consideration which whoever compares these two Poets ought to have always in his eye. Some accuse him for the same things which they overlook or praise in the other; as when they prefer the fable and moral of the *Æneis* to those of the *Iliad*, for the same reasons which might set the *Odysses* above the *Æneis*: as that the hero is a wiser man; and the action of the one more beneficial to his country than that of the other: or else they blame him for not doing what he never designed; as because Achilles is not so good and perfect a prince as *Æneas*, when the very moral of his poem required a contrary character: it is thus that Rapin judges in his comparison of Homer and Virgil. Others select those particular passages of Homer, which are not so laboured as some that Virgil drew out of them: this is the whole management of Scaliger in his *Poetics*. Others quarrel with



what they take for low and mean expressions, sometimes through a false delicacy and refinement, oftener from an ignorance of the graces of the original ; and then triumph in the awkwardness of their own translations : this is the conduct of Perrault in his *Parallels*. Lastly, there are others, who pretending to a fairer proceeding, distinguish between the personal merit of Homer and that of his *work* ; but when they come to assign the causes of the great reputation of the *Iliad*, they found it upon the ignorance of his times, and the prejudice of those that followed : and in pursuance of this principle, they make those accidents (such as the contention of the cities, &c.) to be the causes of his fame, which were in reality the consequences of his merit. The same might as well be said of Virgil, or any great author, whose general character will infallibly raise many casual additions to their reputation. This is the method of Mons. de la Motte ; who yet confesses upon the whole that, in whatever age Homer had lived, he must have been the greatest poet of his nation, and that he may be said in this sense to be the master even of those who surpassed him.

In all these objections we see nothing that contradicts his title to the honour of the chief *Invention* ; and as long as this (which is indeed the characteristic of Poetry itself) remains unequalled by his followers, he still continues superior to them. A cooler judgment may commit fewer faults, and be more approved



in the eyes of *one sort* of Criticks; but that warmth of fancy will carry the loudest and most universal applauses, which holds the heart of a reader under the strongest enchantment. Homer not only appears the inventor of poetry, but excels all the inventors of other arts in this, that he has swallowed up the honour of those who succeeded him. What he has done admitted no increase, it only left room for contraction or regulation. He showed all the stretch of fancy at once; and if he has failed in some of his flights, it was but because he attempted every thing. A work of this kind seems like a mighty Tree which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes, and produces the finest fruit; nature and art conspire\* to raise it; pleasure and profit join to make it valuable: and they who find the justest faults, have only said, that a few branches (which run luxuriant through a richness of nature) might be lopped into form to give it a more regular appearance.

Having now spoken of the beauties and defects of the original, it remains to treat of the translation, with the same view to the chief characteristic. As far as *that* is seen in the main parts of the Poem, such as the fable, manners, and sentiments, no translator can prejudice it but by wilful omissions or contractions. As it also breaks out in every particular image, de-

\* In the first edition, *have conspired*, and *joined*. W.

scription, and simile, whoever lessens or too much softens those, takes off from this chief character. It is the first grand duty of an interpreter to give his author entire and unmaimed; and for the rest, the diction and versification only are his proper province; since these must be his own, but the others he is to take as he finds them.

It should then be considered what methods may afford some equivalent in our language for the graces of these in the Greek. It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language: but it is a great mistake to imagine (as many have done) that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect; which is no less in danger to lose the spirit of an ancient, by deviating into the modern manners of expression. If there be sometimes a darkness, there is often a light in antiquity, which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical style of the translation: and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile dull adherence to the letter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical insolent hope of raising and improving their author. It is not to be doubted that the *fire* of the poem is what a translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing: however it is his safest way



to be content with preserving this to the utmost in the whole, without endeavouring to be more than he finds his author is in any particular place. It is a great secret in writing to know when to be plain, and when poetical and figurative; and it is what Homer will teach us, if we will but follow modestly in his footsteps. Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where his is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by the fear of incurring the censure of a mere *English* Critick. Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just pitch of his style: some of his translators having swelled into fustian in a proud confidence of the *sublime*; others sunk into flatness in a cold and timorous notion of *simplicity*. Methinks I see these different followers of Homer, some sweating and straining after him by violent leaps and bounds (the certain signs of false mettle), others slowly and servilely creeping in his train, while the Poet himself is all the time proceeding with an unaffected and equal majesty before them. However, of the two extremes one could sooner pardon frenzy than frigidity: no author is to be envied for such commendations as he may gain by that character of style which his friends must agree together to call *simplicity*, and the rest of the world will call *dulness*. There is a graceful and dignified simplicity, as well as a bald and sordid one, which differ as much from each other as the air



of a plain man from that of a sloven : it is one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dressed at all. Simplicity is the mean between ostentation and rusticity.

This pure and noble simplicity is no where in such perfection as in the *Scripture* and our Author. One may affirm, with all respect to the inspired writings, that the *divine Spirit* made use of no other words but what were intelligible and common to men at that time, and in that part of the world ; and as Homer is the author nearest to those, his style must of course bear a greater resemblance to the sacred books than that of any other writer. This consideration (together with what has been observed of the parity of some of his thoughts) may methinks induce a translator on the one hand to give into several of those general phrases and manners of expression, which have attained a veneration even in our language from being used in the *Old Testament* ; as on the other, to avoid those which have been appropriated to the Divinity, and in a manner consigned to mystery and religion.

For a farther preservation of this air of simplicity, a particular care should be taken to express with all plainness those *moral sentences* and *proverbial speeches* which are so numerous in this Poet. They have something venerable, and as I may say oracular, in that unadorned gravity and shortness with which

they are delivered : a grace which would be utterly lost by endeavouring to give them what we call a more ingenious (that is, a more modern) turn in the paraphrase.

Perhaps the mixture of some *Græcisms* and old words after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable antique cast\*. But certainly the use of modern terms of war and government, such as *platoon*, *campaign*, *junto*, or the like (into which some of his translators have fallen) cannot be allowable† ; those only excepted, without which it is impossible to treat the subjects in any living language.

There are two peculiarities in Homer's diction which are a sort of *marks* or *moles*, by which every common eye distinguishes him at first sight : those who are not his greatest admirers look upon them as defects, and those who are, seem pleased with them as beauties. I speak of his *compound epithets*, and of his *repetitions*. Many of the former cannot be

\* Fenton, in particular, throughout his translation of four books in the *Odyssey*, has studiously adopted on every possible opportunity the Miltonian phrase ; and in very many instances with great felicity. W.

† Ogilby, who is very injudicious in this respect, and grossly destitute of taste in his employment of coarse undignified expressions of this nature, seems principally intended here. W.



done literally into the English without destroying the purity of our language \*. I believe such should be retained as slide easily of themselves into an English compound, without violence to the ear or the received rules of composition; as well as those which have received a sanction from the authority of our best Poets, and are become familiar through their use of them; such as the *cloud-compelling Jove*, &c. As for the rest, whenever any can be as fully and significantly exprest in a single word as in a compounded one, the course to be taken is obvious.

Some that cannot be so turned as to preserve their full image by one or two words, may have justice done them by circumlocution; as the epithet εἰνοσίφυλλος to a mountain, would appear little or ridiculous translated literally *leaf-shaking*†, but affords a majestic idea in the *periphrasis*:

The lofty mountain shakes his waving woods.

Others that admit of differing significations, may receive an advantage by a judicious variation according to the occasions on which they are introduced.

\* The number of these would be found, I believe, upon experiment to be extremely small. W.

† For what reason? Not from the incapacity of our language, but because the word *shake* is trivial, and void of elevation. Substitute *leaf-waving*, and I descry nothing in the Greek compound that is not adequately exhibited in the English: whereas in the paraphrastic verse, independently of immoderate diffusion, we are offended by tautology: for surely it is superfluous to inform us, that the woods of a *shaking* mountain *wave*: the connexion is inevitable. W.

For example, the epithet of Apollo, ἐκκρόλος, or *far-shooting*, is capable of two explications; one literal in respect of the darts and bow, the ensigns of that God; the other allegorical with regard to the rays of the sun: therefore in such places where Apollo is represented as a God in person, I would use the former interpretation, and where the effects of the sun are described, I would make choice of the latter. Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual repetition of the same epithets which we find in Homer, and which, though it might be accommodated (as has been already shewn) to the ear of those times, is by no means so to ours: but one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional beauty from the occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly, a translator may at once show his fancy and his judgment.

As for Homer's *Repetitions*, we may divide them into three sorts; of whole narrations and speeches, of single sentences, and of one verse or hemistich. I hope it is not impossible to have such a regard to these, as neither to lose so known a mark of the author on the one hand, nor to offend the reader too much on the other. The repetition is not ungraceful in those speeches where the dignity of the speaker renders it a sort of insolence to alter his words; as in the message from Gods to men, or from higher powers to inferiors in concerns of state, or where the ceremonial of religion seems to require it, in the solemn



forms of prayers, oaths, or the like. In other cases, I believe the best rule is, to be guided by the nearness, or distance, at which the repetitions are placed in the original: when they follow too close, one may vary the expression, but it is a question whether a professed translator be authorized to omit any: if they be tedious, the author is to answer for it\*.

It only remains to speak of the *Versification*. Homer (as has been said) is perpetually applying the sound to the sense, and varying it on every new subject. This is indeed one of the most exquisite beauties of poetry, and attainable by very few: I know only Homer eminent for it in the Greek, and Virgil in Latin. I am sensible it is what may sometimes happen by chance, when a writer is warm, and fully possest of his image: however it may be reasonably believed they designed this, in whose verse it so manifestly appears in a superior degree to all others. Few readers have the ear to be judges of it; but those who have, will see I have endeavoured at its beauty.

Upon the whole, I must confess myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer. I attempt him in no other hope but that which one may entertain without much vanity, of giving a more tolerable

\* Our poet has adhered to these judicious rules, imposed on himself, with a laudable fidelity. He has varied the expression with great taste in numerous examples, without any entire omissions of those repetitions of his author, alluded to in this passage. W.

copy of him than any entire translation in verse has yet done. We have only those of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. Chapman has taken the advantage of an immeasurable length of verse, notwithstanding which, there is scarce any paraphrase more loose and rambling than his. He has frequent interpolations of four, or six lines, and I remember one in the thirteenth book of the *Odysses*, verse 312, where he has spun twenty verses out of two. He is often mistaken in so bold a manner, that one might think he deviated on purpose, if he did not in other places of his notes insist so much upon verbal trifles. He appears to have had a strong affectation of extracting new meanings out of his author, insomuch as to promise, in his rhyming preface, a poem of the mysteries he had revealed in *Homer*: and perhaps he endeavoured to strain the obvious sense to this end. His expression is involved in fustian, a fault for which he was remarkable in his original writings, as in the tragedy of *Bussy d'Amboise*, &c. In a word, the nature of the man may account for his whole performance: for he appears from his preface and remarks to have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry. His own boast, of having finished half the *Iliad* in less than fifteen weeks, shows with what negligence his version was performed. But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit that animates his translation, which is



something like what one might imagine Homer himself would have writ before he arrived at years of discretion.

Hobbes has given us a correct explanation of the sense in general, but for particulars and circumstances he continually lops them, and often omits the most beautiful. As for its being esteemed a close translation, I doubt not many have been led into that error by the shortness of it, which proceeds not from his following the original line by line, but from the contractions abovementioned. He sometimes omits whole similies and sentences, and is now and then guilty of mistakes, into which no writer of his learning could have fallen, but through carelessness. His poetry, as well as Ogilby's, is too mean for criticism.

It is a great loss to the poetical world that Mr. Dryden did not live to translate the Iliad.

He has left us only the first book, and a small part of the sixth; in which if he has in some places not truly interpreted the sense, or preserved the antiquities, it ought to be excused on account of the haste he was obliged to write in. He seems to have had too much regard to Chapman, whose words he sometimes copies, and has unhappily followed him in passages where he wanders from the original. However, had he translated the whole work, I would no more have attempted Homer after him than Virgil, his version of whom (notwithstanding some human

errors) is the most noble and spirited translation I know in any language. But the fate of great geniuses is like that of great Ministers, though they are confessedly the first in the commonwealth of letters, they must be envied and calumniated only for being at the head of it.

That which in my opinion ought to be the endeavour of any one who translates Homer, is above all things to keep alive that spirit and fire which makes his chief character : in particular places, where the sense can bear any doubt, to follow the strongest and most poetical, as most agreeing with that character ; to copy him in all the variations of his style, and the different modulations of his numbers ; to preserve, in the more active or descriptive parts, a warmth and elevation ; in the more sedate or narrative, a plainness and solemnity ; in the speeches, a fulness and perspicuity ; in the sentences, a shortness and gravity ; not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the words, nor sometimes the very cast of the periods ; neither to omit nor confound any rites or customs of antiquity : perhaps too he ought to include the whole in a shorter compass, than has hitherto been done by any translator who has tolerably preserved either the sense or poetry. What I would farther recommend to him is, to study his author rather from his own text, than from any commentaries, how learned soever, or whatever figure they may make in the estimation of the world ; to



consider him attentively in comparison with Virgil above all the ancients, and with Milton above all the moderns. Next these, the Archbishop of Cambray's Telemachus may give him the truest idea of the spirit and turn of our author, and Bossu's admirable treatise of the Epic poem the justest notion of his design and conduct. But after all, with whatever judgment and study a man may proceed, or with whatever happiness he may perform such a work, he must hope to please but a few; those only who have at once a taste of poetry, and competent learning. For to satisfy such as want either is not in the nature of this undertaking; since a mere modern wit can like nothing that is not *modern*, and a pedant nothing that is not *Greek*.

What I have done is submitted to the publick, from whose opinions I am prepared to learn; though I fear no judges so little as our best poets, who are most sensible of the weight of this task. As for the worst, whatever they shall please to say, they may give me some concern as they are unhappy men\*, but none as they are malignant writers. I was guided in this translation by judgments very different from theirs, and by persons for whom they have no kindness, if an old observation be true, that the strongest antipathy in the world is that of fools to men of wit. Mr. Addison was the first whose advice

\* *Unhappy*, from the torments of envy and unfriendly passions.

determined me to undertake this task, who was pleased to write to me upon that occasion in such terms as I cannot repeat without vanity. I was obliged to Sir Richard Steele for a very early recommendation of my undertaking to the publick. Dr. Swift promoted my interest with that warmth with which he always serves his friend. The humanity and frankness of Sir Samuel Garth are what I never knew wanting on any occasion. I must also acknowledge, with infinite pleasure, the many friendly offices, as well as sincere criticisms of Mr. Congreve, who had led me the way in translating some parts of Homer\*. I must add the names of Mr. Rowe and Dr. Parnell, though I shall take a farther opportunity of doing justice to the last, whose good-nature (to give it a great panegyrick) is no less extensive than his learning. The favour of these gentlemen is not entirely undeserved by one who bears them so true an affection. But what can I say of the honour so many of the *Great* have done me, while the *first*

\* The following sentence is added in the first edition, and in the last with Dr. Johnson's lives:—"As I wish for the sake of the world he had prevented me in the rest." The cooler judgment of our poet, I presume, under a commendable persuasion of his own vast superiority as a translator, of which it was impossible for him to be unconscious, led him to disapprove an ebullition of compliment, excited by the warmth of friendship and an unreflecting humility, in opposition to the truth. He had too much good sense and magnanimity to incur one *real* immorality to avoid the *appearance* of another: to be insincere, for the temporary and unmanly purpose of propitiating calumny by an affected candour. W.



*names* of the age appear as my subscribers, and the most distinguished patrons and ornaments of learning as my chief encouragers. Among these it is a particular pleasure to me to find, that my highest obligations are to such who have done most honour to the name of Poet: that his Grace the Duke of Buckingham was not displeased I should undertake the author to whom he has given (in his excellent *Essay*) so complete a praise\*.

Read *Homer once*, and you can read no more;  
For all Books else appear so mean, so poor,  
Verse will seem Prose: but still persist to read,  
And *Homer* will be all the Books you need.

That the Earl of Halifax was one of the first to favour me, of whom it is hard to say whether the advancement of the polite arts is more owing to his generosity or his example†. That such a genius as

\* In the first edition:—“*the finest praise he ever yet received.*” But these sacrificial offerings of panegyric, so difficult to adjust between the contending claims of Truth and Obligation, are liable to much curtailment and qualification, when the first fervours of devotion have subsided, and the clouds of incense suffer the light of calm conviction to be transmitted to our eyes. W.

† It will amuse the reader to hear from Spence a somewhat different judgment from our author on the critical discernment of this noble person.

“ The famous Lord Halifax was rather a pretender to taste,  
“ than really possessed of it. When I had finished the two or three  
“ first books of my translation of the *Iliad*, that Lord desired to  
“ have the pleasure of hearing them read at his house. Addison  
“ Congreve, and Garth, were there at the reading. In four or  
“ five places, Lord Halifax stopt me very civilly, and with a speech

my Lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguished in the great scenes of business, than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning, has not refused to be the critick of these sheets, and the patron of their writer. And that the noble author\* of the Tragedy of *Heroic Love*, has continued his partiality to me, from my writing Pastorals, to my attempting the *Iliad*. I cannot deny myself the pride of confessing,

“ each time, much of the same kind.” “ I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope, but there is something in that passage that does not quite please me. Be so good as to mark the place, and consider it a little at your leisure. I’m sure you can give it a little turn.” “ I returned from Lord Halifax’s with Dr. Garth, in his chariot ; and, as we were going along, was saying to the Doctor, that my Lord had laid me under a great deal of difficulty by such loose and general observation : that I had been thinking over the passages almost ever since, and could not guess at what it was that offended his Lordship in either of them. Garth laughed heartily at my embarrassment : said, I had not been long enough acquainted with Lord Halifax to know his way yet ; that I need not puzzle myself about looking those places over and over, when I got home.” “ All you need do,” says he, “ is to leave them just as they are ; call on Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then read them to him as altered.” “ I followed his advice ; waited on Lord Halifax some time after ; said, ‘ I hoped he would find his objections to those passages removed ;’ “ read them to him exactly as they were at first : and his lordship was extremely pleased with them, and cried out, *Ay now they are perfectly right : nothing can be better.*” P.

\* Here also an original compliment is rescinded. The passage stood thus in the first edition : “ And that *so excellent an imitator of Homer* as the noble author of the tragedy of *Heroic Love*.”

The nobleman here intended was George Granville, Lord Lansdown. W.



that I have had the advantage not only of their advice for the conduct in general, but their correction of several particulars of this translation.

I could say a great deal of the pleasure of being distinguished by the Earl of Carnarvon, but it is almost absurd to particularize any one generous action in a person whose life is a continued series of them. Mr. Stanhope\*, the present Secretary of State, will pardon my desire of having it known that he was pleased to promote this affair. The particular zeal of Mr. Harcourt † (the son of the late Lord Chancellor) gave me a proof how much I am honoured in a share of his friendship. I must attribute to the same motive that of several others of my friends, to whom all acknowledgments are rendered unnecessary by the privileges of a familiar correspondence; and I am satisfied I can no way better oblige men of their turn, than by my silence.

In short, I have found more patrons than ever Homer wanted. He would have thought himself happy to have met the same favour at Athens, that has been shown me by its learned Rival, the University of Oxford. And I can hardly envy him those pompous honours he received after death, when I reflect on the enjoyment of so many agreeable obli-

\* He was grandson to the first Earl of Chesterfield by a second wife, and uncle to the father of the celebrated Earl of our times. See Maty's Memoirs. W.

† To whose memory our poet afterwards wrote an elegant and pathetic epitaph. W.

gations, and easy friendships, which make the satisfaction of life. This distinction is the more to be acknowledged, as it is shown to one whose pen has never gratified the prejudices of particular *parties*, or the vanities of particular *men*. Whatever the success may prove, I shall never repent of an undertaking in which I have experienced the candour and friendship of so many persons of merit; and in which I hope to pass\* some of those years of youth that are generally lost in a circle of follies, after a manner neither wholly unuseful to others, nor disagreeable to myself.

\* This part of the preface, therefore, must have been written before the completion of his translation. W.





AN  
E S S A Y  
ON THE  
LIFE, WRITINGS, AND LEARNING  
OF  
H O M E R.

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**T**HERE is something in the mind of man, which goes beyond bare curiosity, and even carries us on to a shadow of friendship with those great geniuses whom we have known to excel in former ages. Nor will it appear less to any one, who considers how much it partakes of the nature of friendship; how it compounds itself of an admiration raised by what we meet with concerning them; a tendency to be farther acquainted with them, by getting every circumstance of their lives; a kind of complacency in their company, when we retire to enjoy what they

have left; an union with them in those sentiments they approve; and an endeavour to defend them when we think they are injuriously attacked, or even sometimes with too partial an affection.

There is also in mankind a spirit of envy or opposition, which makes them uneasy to see others of the same species seated far above them in a sort of perfection. And this, at least, so far as regards the fame of writers\* has not always been known to die with a man, but to pursue his remains with idle traditions, and weak conjectures; so that his name, which is not to be forgotten, shall be preserved only to be stained and blotted. The controversy, which was carried on between the author and his enemies, while he was living, shall still be kept on foot; not entirely upon his own account, but on theirs who live after him; some being fond to praise extravagantly, and others as rashly eager to contradict his admirers. This proceeding, on both sides, gives us an image of the first descriptions of war, such as the Iliad affords; where a hero disputes the field with an army 'till it is his time to die, and then the battle, which we expected to fall of course, is renewed about the body; his friends contending that they may embalm and honour it, his enemies that they may cast it to the dogs and vultures.

\* In the first edition:—"so far as *we speak* of the fame of writers, "has not always been known to die with a man *entirely*, but—."



There are yet others of a low kind of taste, who, without any malignity to the character of a great author, lessen the dignity of their subject by insisting too meanly upon little particularities. They imagine it the part of an historian to omit nothing they meet with, concerning him; and gather every thing without any distinction\*, to the prejudice or neglect of the more noble parts of his character: like those trifling painters, or sculptors, who bestow infinite pains and patience upon the most insignificant part of a figure, till they sink the grandeur of the whole, by finishing every thing with the neatest want of judgment.

Besides these, there is a fourth sort of men, who pretend to divest themselves of partiality† on both sides, and to get above that imperfect idea of their subject, which little writers fall into; who propose to themselves a calm search after truth, and a rational adherence to probability in their historical collections: who neither wish to be led into the fables of superstition‡, nor are willing to support the injustice of a malignant criticism; but, endeavouring to steer in a middle way, have obtained a character of failing

\* In the first edition:—"concerning him *whom they write upon*, "gather every thing *wherein he is named*, without any distinction."— W.

† In the first edition:—"of *impetuous emotions* on both sides." W.

‡ In the first edition he wrote *poetry* for *superstition*, and *falsehoods* for *injustice*: and in this edition has given perspicuity to the conclusion of the paragraph, originally written thus:—"for history, even from "the darkest ages." W.

least in the choice of materials for history, though drawn from the darkest ages.

Being therefore to write something concerning a Life which there is little prospect of our knowing, after it has been the fruitless inquiry of so many ages\*, and which has however been thus differently treated by historians, I shall endeavour to speak of it not as a certainty, but as the tradition, opinion, or collection of authors, who have been supposed to write of Homer in these four preceding methods; to which we also shall add some farther conjectures of our own. After his life has been thus rather invented than written, I shall consider him historically as an author, with regard to those works which he has left behind him: in doing which, we may trace the degrees of esteem they have obtained in different periods of time, and regulate our present opinion of them, by a view of that age in which they were writ.

I. I. If we take a view of Homer in those fabulous traditions which the admiration of the ancient heathens has occasioned, we find them running to superstition, and multiplied and contradictory to one another,† in the different accounts which are

\* It may be collected from Herodotus, ii. 53, that even this historian was not clear within a century as to the precise time, in which Homer lived, nor as to the comparative antiquity of him and Hesiod. W.

† In the first edition:—"independent on one another." W.



given with respect to Ægypt and Greece, the two native countries of fable.

We have one in \* Eustathius most strangely framed, which Alexander Paphius has reported concerning Homer's birth and infancy. That " he was born in " Ægypt of Dmasagoras and Æthra, and brought up " by a daughter of Orus, the priest of Isis, who " was herself a prophetess, and from whose breasts " drops of honey would frequently distil into the " mouth of the infant. In the night-time the first " sounds he uttered were the notes of nine several " birds ; in the morning he was found playing with " nine doves in the bed : the Sibyl, who attended " him, used to be seized with a poetical fury, and " utter verses, in which she commanded Dmasagoras " to build a temple to the Muses : this he performed " in obedience to her inspiration, and related all these " things to the child when he was grown up ; who, " in memory of the doves which played with him " during his infancy, has in his works preferred this " bird to the honour of bringing Ambrosia to Jupiter."

One would think a story of this nature, so fit for age to talk of, and infancy to hear, were incapable of being handed down to us. But we find the tradition again taken up to be heightened in one part, and carried forward in another. † Heliodorus, who had heard of this claim which Ægypt put in for

\* Eustathius in Od. 12.

† Heliod. Æthiop. l. 3.

Homer, endeavours to strengthen it by naming Thebes for the particular place of his birth. He allows too, that a priest was his reputed father, but that his real father, according to the opinion of Ægypt, was Mercury: he says, “ That when the Priest was “ celebrating the rites of his country, and therefore “ slept with his wife in the Temple, the God had “ knowledge of her, and begot Homer: that he was “ born with tufts of hair on his \* thigh, as a sign of “ unlawful generation, from whence he was called “ Homer by the nations through which he wandered: “ that he himself was the occasion why this story “ of his divine extraction is unknown; because “ he neither told his name, race, nor country, “ being ashamed of his exile, to which his reputed “ father drove him from among the consecrated “ youths, on account of that mark, which their “ priests esteemed a testimony of an incestuous birth.”

These are the extravagant stories by which men, who have not been able to express how much they admire him, transcend the bounds of probability to say something extraordinary. The mind, that becomes dazzled with the sight of his performances, loses the common idea of a man in the fancied splendor of perfection: it deems nothing less than a God worthy to be his Father, nothing less than a Prophetess deserving to be his nurse; and, growing un-

\* ‘Ο μηρὸς, Femur.



willing that he should be spoken of in a language beneath its imaginations, delivers fables in the place of history.

But whatever has thus been offered to support the claim of Ægypt, they who plead for Greece are not to be accused for coming short of it. Their fancy rose with a refinement as much above that of their masters\*, as the Greek imagination was superior to that of the Ægyptians: their fiction was but a veil, and frequently wrought fine enough to be seen through, so that it hardly hides the meaning it is made to cover, from the first glance of the imagination. For a proof of this, we may mention that poetical genealogy which is delivered for Homer's, in the † Greek treatise of the contention between him and Hesiod, and but little varied by the relation of it in Suidas.

“ The Poet Linus (say they) was born of Apollo,  
 “ and Thoöse the daughter of Neptune. Pierus of  
 “ Linus: Æagrus of King Pierus and the Nymph  
 “ Methone: Orpheus of Æagrus and the Muse  
 “ Calliope. From Orpheus came Othrys; from him  
 “ Harmonides; from him Philoterpus; from him  
 “ Euphemus; from him Epiphrades, who begot Me-  
 “ nalops, the father of Dius; Dius had Hesiod the  
 “ Poet and Perses by Pucamede, the daughter of

\* In the first edition:—“ above *what we are supposed to have* of  
 “ their masters; and frequently *the veil of fiction is wrought fine*  
 “ enough—.” Hence arose the repetition of *imagination*. W.

† Ἀγών Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου.

“ Apollo : then Perses had Mæon, on whose daughter  
 “ Crytheis, the river Meles begot Homer.”

Here we behold a wonderful genealogy, contrived industriously to raise our idea to the highest, where Gods, Goddesses, Muses, Kings, and Poets link in a descent ; nay, where Poets are made to depend, as it were, in clusters upon the same stalk beneath one another. If we consider too that Harmonides is derived from harmony, Philoterpus from love of delight, Euphemus from beautiful diction, Epiphrades from intelligence, and Pucamede from prudence ; it may not be improbable, but the inventors meant, by a fiction of this nature, to turn such qualifications into persons, as were agreeable to his character for whom the line was drawn : so that every thing divine or great, will thus come together by the extravagant indulgence of fancy, while Admiration turns itself in some to bare Fable, in others to Allegory\*.

After this fabulous tree of his pedigree, we may regularly view him in one passage concerning his birth, which, though it differs in a circumstance from what has been here delivered, yet carries on the same air, and regards the same traditions. There is a short life of Homer attributed to Plutarch, wherein a third part of Aristotle on poetry, which is now lost, is quoted for an account of his uncommon birth, in this manner. “ At the time when Neleus, the son of

\* In the first edition:—“ while it turns itself *sometimes* to admiration, and *sometimes* to allegory.” W.



“ Codrus, led the colony which was sent into Ionia,  
“ there was in the island of Iö a young girl, compres-  
“ sed by a Genius, who delighted to associate with  
“ the Muses and share in their consorts. She, finding  
“ herself with child, and being touched with the  
“ shame of what had happened to her, removed from  
“ thence to a place called Ægina. There she was  
“ taken in an excursion made by robbers, and being  
“ brought to Smyrna, which was then under the  
“ Lydians, they gave her to Mæon the King, who  
“ married her upon account of her beauty. But  
“ while she walked on the bank of the river Meles,  
“ she brought forth Homer, and expired. The  
“ infant was taken by Mæon, and bred up as his son,  
“ till the death of that Prince.” And from this point  
of the story the Poet is let down into his traditional  
poverty. Here we see, though he be taken out of  
the lineage of Meles, where we met him before, he  
has still as wonderful a rise invented for him; he is  
still to spring from a Demigod, one who was of a  
poetical disposition, from whom he might inherit a  
soul tuned to poetry, and receive an assistance of hea-  
venly inspiration.

In his life the most general tradition concerning  
him is his *blindness*, yet there are some who will not  
allow even this to have happened after the manner in  
which it falls upon other men: chance and sickness  
are excluded; nothing less than Gods and heroes  
must be visibly concerned about him. Thus we

find among the different accounts which \* Hermias has collected concerning his blindness, that when Homer resolved to write of Achilles, he had an exceeding desire to fill his mind with a just idea of so glorious a hero: wherefore, having paid all due honours at his tomb, he intreats that he may obtain a sight of him. The hero grants his poet's petition, and rises in a glorious suit of armour, which cast so unsufferable a splendor, that Homer lost his eyes while he gazed for the enlargement of his notions †.

If this be any thing more than a mere fable, one would be apt to imagine it insinuated his contracting a blindness by too intense an application while he wrote his Iliad. But it is a very pompous way of letting us into the knowledge of so short a truth: it looks as if men imagined the lives of poets should be poetically written; that to speak plainly of them, were to speak contemptibly; or that we debase them when they are placed in less glorious company than those exalted spirits which they themselves have been fond to celebrate. We may, however, in some measure be reconciled to this last idle fable, for having

\* Hermias in *Phæd. Plat.* Leo Allat. *de Patr. Hom.* c. 10.

† One might suppose, not absurdly, that Gray had taken an impulse from this fable in his fiction of Milton; a fiction, as nobly conceived, as it is sublimely wrought:

The living throne, the sapphire blaze,  
Where angels tremble while they gaze,  
He saw: but, blasted with excess of light,  
Clos'd his eyes in endless night.

W.



occasioned so beautiful an Episode in the *Ambra* of *Politian*. That which does not inform us in a history, may please us in its proper sphere of poetry.

II. Such stories as these have been the effects of a superstitious fondness, and of the astonishment of men at what they consider\* in a view of perfection. But neither have all the same taste, nor do they equally submit to the superiority of others, nor bear that human nature, which they know to be imperfect, should be praised in an extreme, without opposition. From some principles of this kind have arisen a second sort of stories, which glance at Homer with malignant suppositions, and endeavour to throw a diminishing air over his life, as a kind of answer to those who sought to aggrandize him injudiciously.

Under this head we may reckon those ungrounded conjectures with which his adversaries asperse the very design and prosecution of his travels, when they insinuate that they were one continued search after authors who had written before him, and particularly upon the same subject, in order to destroy them, or to rob them of their inventions.

Thus we read in † Diodorus Siculus, “ That there “ was one Daphne, the daughter of Tiresias, who “ from her inspirations obtained the title of a Sibyl.

\* In the first edition :—“ and of *our* astonishment at what *we* “ consider—.” W.

† Diod. Sic. l. 4.

“ She had a very extraordinary genius, and being  
“ made priestess at Delphos, wrote oracles with won-  
“ derful elegance, which Homer sought for, and adorn-  
“ ed his poems with several of her verses.” But she  
is placed so far in the fabulous age of the world, that  
nothing can be averred of her : and as for the verses  
now ascribed to the Sibyls, they are more modern  
than to be able to confirm the story ; which, as it is  
universally assented to, discovers that whatever there  
is in them in common with Homer, the compilers  
have rather taken from him ; perhaps to strengthen  
the authority of their work by the protection of this  
tradition.

The next insinuation we hear is from Suidas, that  
Palamedes, who fought at Troy, was famous for  
poetry, and wrote concerning that war in the Dorick  
letter, which he invented, probably much against  
Agamemnon and Ulysses, his mortal enemies. Upon  
this account some have fancied his works were sup-  
pressed by Agamemnon’s posterity ; or that their  
entire destruction was contrived and effected by Ho-  
mer, when he undertook the same subject. But  
surely the works of so considerable a man, when they  
had been able to bear up so long a time as that which  
passed between the siege of Troy and the flourishing  
of Homer, must have been too much dispersed, for one  
of so mean a condition as he is represented, to have  
destroyed them in every place, though he had been  
never so much assisted by the vigilant temper of Envy.



And we may say too, that what might have been capable of raising this principle in him, must be capable of being in some measure esteemed by others, and of having at least one line of it preserved to us as his.

After him, in the order of time, we meet with a whole set of names, to whom the maligners of Homer would have him obliged, without being able to prove their assertion. Suidas mentions Corinnus Iliensis, the secretary of Palamedes, who writ a poem upon the same subject, but no one is produced as having seen it. \* Tzetzes mentions (and from Johannes Melala† only) Sisyphus the Coan, secretary of Teucer, but it is not so much as known if he writ verse or prose. Besides these, are Dictys the Cretan, secretary to Idomeneus, and Dares the Phrygian, an attendant of Hector, who have spurious treatises passing under their names. From each of these is Homer said to have borrowed his whole argument; so inconsistent are these stories with one another.

The next names we find, are Demodocus, whom Homer might have met at Corcyra; and Phemius, whom he might have met at Ithaca: the one (as ‡ Plutarch says) having according to tradition written the war of Troy, the other the *return* of the Grecian

\* Tzetzes, Chil. 5. Hist. 29.

† The name is never thus written; some have it *Malala*, and others *Malela*. W.

‡ Plutarch on Musick.

captains. But these are only two names of friends, which he is pleased to honour with eternity in his poem, or two different pictures of himself, as author of the *Iliad* and *Odysses*, or entirely the children of his imagination, without any particular allusion. So that his usage here puts me in mind of his own *Vulcan* in the \* *Iliad* : the God had cast two statues, which he endued with the power of motion ; and it is said presently after, that he is scarce able to go unless they support him.

It is reported by some, says † *Ptolemæus Ephæstio*, “ That there was before *Homer* a woman of Memphis, called *Phantasia*, who writ of the wars of *Troy*, “ and the wanderings of *Ulysses*. Now *Homer* “ arriving at *Memphis*, where she had laid up her “ works, and getting acquainted with *Phanitas*, whose “ business it was to copy the sacred writings, he “ obtained a sight of these, and followed entirely the “ scheme she had drawn.” But this is a wild story, which speaks of an *Ægyptian* woman with a Greek name, and who never was heard of but upon this account. It appears indeed from his knowledge of the *Ægyptian* learning, that he was initiated into their mysteries, and for aught we know by one *Phanitas*. But if we consider what the name of the woman signifies, it seems only as if, from being used in a figurative expression, it had been mistaken afterwards for a proper name. And then the meaning will be that,

\* *Iliad*, xviii, 87. † *Ptol. Eph. Excerpt. apud Photium*, l.



having gathered as much information concerning the Grecian and Trojan story, as he could be furnished with from the accounts of Ægypt, which were generally mixed with fancy and fable, he wrought out his plans of the *Iliad* and the *Odysses*.

We pass all these stories, together with the *little Iliad* of Siagrus, mentioned by \*Ælian. But one cannot leave this subject without reflecting on the depreciating humour, and odd industry of man, which shews itself in raising such a number of insinuations that clash with each other, and in spiriting up such a crowd of unwarranted names to support them. Nor can we but admire at the contradictory nature of this proceeding; that names of works, which either never were in being, or never worthy to live, should be produced only to persuade us that the most lasting and beautiful poem of the ancients was taken out of them. A beggar might be content to patch up a garment with such shreds as the world throws away, but it is never to be imagined an Emperor would make his robes of them.

After Homer had spent a considerable time in travel, we find him towards his age introduced to such an action as tends to his disparagement. It is not enough to accuse him for spoiling the dead, they raise a living author, by whom he must be baffled in that qualification on which his fame is founded.

There is in † Hesiod an account of an ancient

\* Ælian. l. 114. c. 2. † Hesiod. *Op. & Dierum*, l. 2. ver. 272, &c.

poetical contention at the funeral of Amphidamas, in which, he says, he obtained the prize, but does not mention from whom he carried it. There is also among the \**Hymns* ascribed to Homer, a prayer to Venus for success in a poetical dispute, but it neither mentions where, nor against whom. But though they have neglected to name their antagonists, others have since taken care to fill up their stories by putting them together. The making two such considerable names in poetry engage, carries an amusing pomp in it, like making two heroes of the first rank enter the lists of combat. And if Homer and Hesiod had their parties among the *Grammarians*, here was an excellent opportunity for Hesiod's favourers to make a sacrifice of Homer. Hence a bare conjecture might spread into a *tradition*, then the tradition give occasion to an *epigram*, which is yet extant, and again the *epigram* (for want of knowing the time it was writ in) be alleged as a *proof* of that conjecture from whence it sprung. After this a † whole treatise was written upon it, which appears not very ancient, because it mentions Adrian: the story agrees in the main with the short account we find in ‡ Plutarch, “ That Ganictor, the son of Amphidamas, King of  
 “ Eubœa, being used to celebrate his father's funeral  
 “ games, invited from all parts men famous for  
 “ strength and wisdom. Among these Homer and

\* Hom. Hymn. 2. ad Venerem. † Ἀγὼν Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου.

‡ Plut. *Banquet of the seven wise men.*



“ Hesiod arrived at Chalcis. The king Panidas pre-  
 “ sided over the contest, which being finished, he  
 “ decreed the Tripod to Hesiod, with this sentence,  
 “ That the poet of peace and husbandry better  
 “ deserved to be crowned than the poet of war and  
 “ contention \*. Whereupon Hesiod dedicated the  
 “ prize to the Muses, with this inscription :

“ Ἡσίοδος Μῆσαις Ἐλικωνίσι τὸνδ' ἀνέθηκεν,  
 “ Ὑμνῷ νικήσας ἐν Χαλκιδι θεῖον Ὅμηρον.”

Which are two lines taken from that place in Hesiod where he mentions no antagonist, and altered, that the two names might be brought in, as is evident by comparing them with these :

“ Ὑμνῷ νικήσαντ' αἶψα φέρειν τρίποδ' ἀτρώεῖν,  
 “ Τὸν μὲν Ἐγὼ Μῆσης Ἐλικωνιάδεσσι ἀνέθηκα.

To answer this story, we may take notice that Hesiod is generally placed after Homer. Grævius, his own commentator, sets him a hundred years lower ; and whether he were so or no, yet † Plutarch has slightly passed the whole account as a fable. Nay, we may draw an argument against it from Hesiod himself : he had a love of fame, which caused him to engage at the funeral games, and which went so far as to make him record his conquest in his own works ; had he defeated Homer, the same principle would have made him mention a name that could have

\* Thus in the first edition :—“ with this *elogy* in the sentence,  
 “ That the poet of peace and husbandry better deserved to be  
 “ crowned, than *he who stirs us up to war and contention.*” W.

† Plut. *Sym.* l. 5. § 2.

secured his own to immortality. A poet, who records his glory, would not omit the noblest circumstance, and Homer, like a captive Prince, had certainly graced the triumph of his adversary.

Towards the latter end of his life there is another story invented, which makes him conclude it in a manner altogether beneath the greatness of a genius. We find, in the life said to be written by Plutarch, a tradition, "That he was warned by an oracle to "beware of the *young men's riddle*. This remained "long obscure to him, till he arrived at the island Iö. "There as he sat to behold the fishermen, they proposed to him a riddle in verse, which he being unable "to answer, died for grief." This story refutes itself by carrying superstition at one end, and folly at the other. It seems conceived with an air of derision, to lay a great man in the dust after a foolish manner. The same sort of hand might have framed that tale of Aristotle's drowning himself because he could not account for the Euripus: the design is the same, the turn the same; and all the difference, that the great men are each to suffer in his character, the one by a *poetical riddle*, the other by a *philosophical problem*. But these are actions which can only arise from the meanness of pride, or extravagance of madness: a soul enlarged with knowledge (so vastly as that of Homer) better knows the proper stress which is to be laid upon every incident, and the proportion of concern, or carelessness, with which it ought to be affect-



ed. But it is the fate of narrow capacities to measure mankind by a false standard, and imagine the great, like themselves, capable of being disconcerted by little occasions ; to frame their malignant fables according to this imagination, and to stand detected by it as by an evident mark of ignorance.

III. The third manner in which the life of Homer has been written, is but an amassing of all the traditions and hints which the writers could meet with, great or little, in order to tell a story of him to the world. Perhaps the want of choice materials might put them upon the necessity ; or perhaps an injudicious desire of saying all they could, occasioned the fault. However it be, a life composed of trivial circumstances, which (though it give a true account of several passages) shews a man but little in that light in which he was most famous \*, and has hardly any thing correspondent to the idea we entertain of him ; such a life, I say, will never answer rightly the demand the world has upon an historian. Yet the most formal account we have of Homer is of this nature, I mean that which is said to be collected by Herodotus. It is, in short, an unsupported minute treatise, composed of events which lie within the compass of probability and belong to the lowest sphere of life. It seems through all its frame to be entirely conducted by the spirit of a

III.

Stories of Homer  
proceeding from  
trifling curiosity.

\* In the first edition thus :—“ passages) *has* but little of that appearance in which a man was most famous.”

*Grammarian*; ever abounding with *extempore verses*, as if it were to prove a thing so unquestionable as our author's title to rapture; and at the same time the occasions are so poorly invented, that they misbecome the warmth of a poetical imagination. There is nothing in it above the life which a *Grammarian* might lead himself; nay, it is but such a one as they commonly do lead, the highest stage of which is to be *master of a school*. But, because this is a treatise to which writers have had recourse for want of a better, I shall give the following abstract of it.

Homer was born at Smyrna, about one hundred sixty-eight years after the siege of Troy, and six hundred twenty-two years before the *expedition* of Xerxes. His mother's name was Crytheis, who proving unlawfully with child, was sent away from Cumæ by her uncle, with Ismenias, one of those who led the colony of Smyrna, then building. A while after, as she was celebrating a festival with other women on the banks of the river Meles, she was delivered of Homer, whom she therefore named Melesigenes. Upon this she left Ismenias, and supported herself by her labour\*, 'till Phemius (who taught a school in Smyrna) fell in love with her, and married her. But both dying in process of time, the school fell to Homer, who managed it with such wisdom, that he was universally admired both by natives and

\* In the first edition:—"by *working*."



strangers. Amongst these latter was Mentès, a master of a ship from Leucadia, by whose persuasions and promises he gave up his school, and went to travel: with him he visited Spain and Italy, but was left behind at Ithaca upon account of a defluxion in his eyes. During his stay he was entertained by one Mentor, a man of fortune, justice, and hospitality, and learned the principal incidents of Ulysses's life. But at the return of Mentès, he went from thence to Colophon, where, his defluxion renewing, he fell entirely blind. Upon this he could think of no better expedient than to go back to Smyrna, where perhaps he might be supported by those who knew him, and have the leisure to addict himself to poetry. But there he found his poverty increase, and his hopes of encouragement fail; so that he removed to Cumæ, and by the way was entertained for some time at the house of one Tychius, a leather-dresser. At Cumæ his poems were wonderfully admired, but when he proposed to eternize their town if they would allow him a salary, he was answered, that there would be no end of maintaining all the Ὀμηροί, or *blind men*\*, and hence he got the name of Homer. From Cumæ he went to Phocæa, where one Thestorides (a school-master also) offered to maintain him if he would suffer

\* So Hesychius: Ὀμηροὶ ὁ τυφλοί. & Lycophron, ver. 422.

Ὀμηρον ὡς μιν θηκε τετρηνάς λυχνας.

And it seems very probable that he acquired this name from his blindness.

W.

him to transcribe his verses: this Homer complying with through mere necessity, the other had no sooner gotten them, but he removed to Chios; there the poems gained him wealth and honour, while the author himself hardly earned his bread by repeating them. At last, some who came from Chios having told the people that the same verses were published there by a school-master, Homer resolved to find him out. Having therefore landed near that place, he was received by one Glaucus, a shepherd, (at whose door he had like to have been worried by dogs) and carried by him to his master at Bollissus, who admiring his knowledge, intrusted him with the education of his children. Here his praise began to spread, and Thestorides, who heard of his neighbourhood, fled before him. He removed however some time afterwards to Chios, where he set up a school of poetry, gained a competent fortune, married a wife, and had two daughters, the one of which died young, the other was married to his patron at Bollissus. Here he inserted in his poems the names of those to whom he had been most obliged, as Mentès, Phemius, Mentor, and Tychius; and resolving for Athens, he made honourable mention of that city, to prepare the Athenians for a kind reception. But as he went, the ship put in at Samos, where he continued the whole winter, singing at the houses of great men, with a train of boys after him. In spring he went on board again in order to prosecute his journey to Athens, but



landing by the way at Ios, he fell sick, died, and was buried on the sea-shore.

This is the life of Homer ascribed to Herodotus, though it is wonderful it should be so, since it evidently contradicts his own *history*, by placing Homer six hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes; whereas Herodotus himself, who was alive at the time of that expedition, says, Homer was only \* four hundred years before him. However, if we can imagine that there may be any thing of truth in the main parts of this treatise, we may gather these general observations from it: that he showed a great thirst after knowledge, by undertaking such long and numerous travels: that he manifested an unexampled vigour of mind, by being able to write with more fire under the disadvantages of blindness, and the utmost poverty, than any poet after him in better circumstances; and that he had an unlimited sense of fame, (the attendant of noble spirits) which prompted him to engage in new travels, both under these disadvantages, and the additional burthen of old age.

But it will not perhaps be either improper or difficult to make some conjectures which seem to lay open the foundation from whence the traditions which frame the low lives of Homer have risen. We may consider†, that there are no historians of his time,

\* Herod. l. 2.

† More fully in the first edition: "*In the first place we may consider.*" W.

(or none handed down to us) who have mentioned him; and that he has never spoken plainly of himself, in those works which have been ascribed to him without controversy. However, an eager desire to know something concerning him has occasioned mankind to labour the point under these disadvantages, and turn on all hands to see if there were any thing left which might have the least appearance of information. Upon the search they find no remains but his *name* and *works*, and resolve to torture these upon the rack of invention, in order to give some account of the person they belong to.

The first thing therefore they settle is, That what passed for his *name* must be his *name* no longer, but an *additional title* used instead of it. The reason why it was given, must be some accident of his life\*. They then proceed to consider every thing that the word may imply by its derivation. One finds that Ὁ μῆρος signifies a *thigh*; whence arises the tradition in † Heliodorus, that he was banished Ægypt for the mark on that part, which shewed a spurious birth; and this they imagine ground enough to give him the life of a wanderer. A second finds, that Ὁμηρος signifies an *hostage*, and then he must be delivered as such in a war (according to ‡ Proclus) between Smyrna and Chios. A third can derive the name Ὁ μὴ ὀρῶν, *non videns*, from whence he must

\* In the first edition: “*Having thus found an end of the clue,*  
“*they proceed—.*” W.

† Hel. l. 3.

‡ Procl. vit. Hom.



be a *blind man* (as in the piece ascribed to \* Herodotus). A fourth brings it from 'Ομῶς ἐρεῖν, *speaking in council*; and then (as it is in Suidas) he must, by a divine inspiration, declare to the Smyrnæans, that they should war against Colophon. A fifth finds the word may be brought to signify *following others*, or *joining himself* to them, and then he must be called Homer for saying, (as it is quoted from † Aristotle in the life ascribed to Plutarch) that he would Ομηρεῖν, or *follow* the Lydians from Smyrna. Thus has the name been turned and winded, enough at least to give a suspicion, that he who got a *new etymology*, got a handle either for a *new life* of him, or something which he added to the old one.

However, the *name* itself not affording enough to furnish out a whole life, his *works* must be brought in for assistance, and it is taken for granted, That where he has not spoken of himself, he lies veiled beneath the persons or actions of those whom he describes. Because he calls a poet by the name of Phemius in his Odyssey, they conclude this ‡ Phemius was his master. Because he speaks of Demodocus as another poet who was blind, and frequented palaces, he must be sent about § blind, to sing at the doors of rich men. If Ulysses be set upon by dogs at his shepherd's cottage, because this is a low adventure, it is thought to be his own at Bollissus.

\* Herod. vit. Hom. † Plut. vit. Hom.

‡ Herod. vit. Hom. § Herod. vit. Hom.

\* And if he calls the leather-dresser, who made Ajax's shield, by the name of Tychius, he must have been supported by such an one in his wants : nay, some have been so violently carried into this way of conjecturing, that the bare † *simile* of a woman who works hard for her livelihood, is said to have been borrowed from his mother's condition, and brought as a proof of it. Thus he is still imagined to intend himself ; and the fictions of poetry, converted into real facts, are delivered for his life, who has assigned them to others. All those stories in his works which suit with a mean condition are supposed to have happened to him ; though the same way of inference might as well prove him to have acted in a higher sphere, from the many passages that shew his skill in government, and his knowledge of the great parts of life.

There are some other scattered stories of Homer which fall not under these heads, but are however of as trifling a nature ; as much unfit for the materials of history, still more ungrounded, if possible, and arising merely from chance, or the humours of men : such is the report we meet with from ‡ Heraclides, that “ Homer was fined at Athens for a madman ; ” which seems invented by the disciples of Socrates, to cast an odium upon the Athenians for their consenting to the death of their master, and carries in

\* Herod. vit. Hom. † Vid. M. Dacier's Life of Homer.

‡ Diogenes Laertius ex Heracl. in vita Socratis.



it something like a declaiming revenge of the schools, as if the world should imagine the one could be esteemed *mad*, where the other was put to death for being *wicked*. Such another report is that in \*Ælian, “that Homer portioned his daughter with some of “his works for want of money;” which looks but like a whim delivered in the gaiety of fancy; a jest upon a poor wit, which at first might have had an Epigrammatist for its father, and been afterwards gravely understood by some painful collector. In short, mankind have laboured heartily about him to no purpose; they have caught up every thing greedily, with that busy minute curiosity and unsatisfactory inquisitiveness which Seneca calls the *Disease of the Greeks*; they have puzzled the cause by their attempts to find it out; and, like travellers entirely destitute of a road, yet resolved to make one over unpassable deserts, they superinduce error, instead of removing ignorance.

IV†. Whenever any authors have attempted to write the life of Homer, clear from superstition, envy, and trifling, they have grown ashamed of all these traditions. This, however, has not occasioned them to

IV.

Probable conjectures concerning Homer.

\* Ælian, l. 9. cap. 15.

† Thus originally: “Whenever *men* have *set themselves* to write “*a* life of Homer—.” Some variations, still more trivial, I have left unnoticed: which, however, may be probably disapproved by those, who think, and not absurdly, with Dr. Johnson, “that no “fragment of so great a writer should be lost.” W.

desist from the undertaking: but still the difficulty which could not make them desist, has necessitated them, either to deliver the old story with excuses, or else, instead of a life, to compose a treatise partly of *criticism*, and partly of *character*; rather descriptive, than supported by action and the air of history.

They begin with acquainting us, that  
His time.

the *Time* in which he lived has never been fixed beyond dispute, and that the opinions of authors are various concerning it: but the controversy, in its several conjectures, includes a space of years between the earliest and latest, from twenty-four to about five-hundred, after the siege of Troy. Whenever the time was, it seems not to have been near that siege, from his own \* *Invocation* of the *Muses* to recount the catalogue of the ships: “ For “ we, says he, have only heard a rumour, and know “ nothing particularly.” It is remarked by † Velleius Paterculus, That it must have been considerably later, from his own confession, that “ mankind was “ but half as strong in his age, as in that he writ of;” which, as it is founded upon a notion of a gradual degeneracy in our nature, discovers the interval to have been long between Homer and his subject.

\* Ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέειν οἷον ἀκούομεν ἔδ' ἔ τι ἰδόμεν. *Iliad*, ii. ver. 487.

† Hic longe à temporibus belli quod composuit, Troici, quàm quidam rentur, abfuit. Nam fermè ante annos 950 floruit, intra mille natus est: quo nomine non est mirandum quod sæpe illud usurpat, οἷος νυν βρότοις εἶσι. Hòc enim ut *hominum* ita *sæculorum* notatur differentia. Vell. Paterc. lib. i.



But not to trouble ourselves with entering into all the dry dispute, we may take notice, that the world is inclined to stand by the \* *Arundelian marble*, as the most certain computation of those early times; and this, by placing him at the time when Diogenetus ruled in Athens, makes him flourish a little before the Olympiads were established; about three-hundred years after the taking of Troy, and near a thousand before the *Christian Æra*. For a farther confirmation of this, we have some great names of antiquity who give him a contemporary agreeing with the computation. † Cicero says, There was a tradition that Homer lived about the time of Lycurgus. ‡ Strabo tells us, It was reported that Lycurgus went to Chios for an interview with him. And even § Plutarch, when he says, Lycurgus received Homer's works from the grandson of that Creophilus with whom he had lived, does not put him so far backward, but that possibly they might have been alive at the same time.

The next dispute regards his *coun-* His Country.  
*try*, concerning which || Adrian enquired  
 of the Gods, as a question not to be settled by men;  
 and Appion (according to ¶ Pliny) raised a spirit for  
 his information. That which has increased the dif-

\* Vide Dacier, Du Pin, &c. *concerning the Arundelian marble*.

† Cicero Qu. Tuscul. l. 5. ‡ Strabo, l. 10.

§ Plut. vitâ Lycurgi.

|| Ἀγὰν Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου. of Adrian's Oracle. ¶ Plin. l. 30. cap. 2.

ficulty, is the number of contesting places, of which Suidas has reckoned up nineteen in one breath. But his ancient commentator, \*Didymus, found the subject so fertile, as to employ a great part of his four thousand volumes upon it. There is a prophecy of the Sibyls that he should be born at Salamis in Cyprus; and then to play an argument of the same nature against it, there is the *oracle* given to Adrian afterwards, that says he was born in Ithaca. There are *customs* of Æolia and Ægypt cited from his works, to make out by turns and with the same probability, that he belonged to each of them. There was a *school* showed for his at Colophon, and a tomb at Iö, both of equal strength to prove he had his birth in either. As for the Athenians, they challenged him as born where they had a colony; or else in behalf of Greece in general, and as the *metropolis* of its learning, they made his name free of their city (*qu. Liciniâ & Mutiâ lege*, says † Politian) after the manner of that law by which all Italy became free of Rome. All these have their authors to record their titles, but still the weight of the question seems to lie between Smyrna and Chios, which we must therefore take a little more notice of. That Homer was born at Smyrna, is endeavoured to be proved by an ‡ *Epigram*, recorded to have been under the

\* Seneca Ep 88, concerning Didymus.

† Politian *Præf. in Homerum*.

‡ *Epigram on Pisistratus in the anonymous life before Homer.*



Statue of Pisistratus at Athens; by the reports mentioned in Cicero, Strabo, and A. Gellius; and by the Greek lives, which pass under the names of Herodotus, Plutarch, and Proclus; as also the two that are anonymous. The \*Smyrnæans built a temple to him, cast medals of him, and grew so possess'd of his having been theirs, that it is said they burned Zoilus for affronting them in the person of Homer. On the other hand, the Chians plead the ancient authorities of † Simonides and ‡ Theocritus for his being born among them. They mention a race they had, called the Homeridæ, whom they reckoned his posterity; they cast medals of him; they show to this day an Homærium, or temple of Homer, near Bollissus; and close their arguments with a quotation from the Hymn of Apollo (which is acknowledged for Homer's by § Thucydides) where he calls himself, "The blind man that inhabits Chios." The reader has here the sum of the large treatise of Leo Allatius, written particularly on the subject ||, in which, after having separately weigh'd the pretensions of all, he concludes for Chios. For my part, I determine nothing in a point of so much uncertainty; neither

\* Vitruvius Procem. l. 7.

† Simonides *Frag de brevitæ vitæ*, quoting a verse of Homer:

Ἐν δὲ τὸ κάλλιστον Χῖος εἴπεν ἀνὴρ.

‡ Theocritus in Dioscuris, *ad fin.*

————— Χῖος ᾠοιδὸς

Ἵμνήσας Πριάμοιο πόλιν καὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν,

Ἰλιάδας τε μάχας.

§ Thucyd. lib. 3.

|| Leo Allatius *de patriâ Homeri.*

which of these was honoured with his birth; nor whether any of them was; nor again, whether each may not have produced its own Homer; since \*Xenophon says, there were many of the name. But one cannot avoid being surprised at the prodigious veneration for his character, which could engage mankind with such eagerness in a point so little essential; that Kings should send to oracles for the enquiry of his birth-place; that cities should be in strife about it, and whole lives of learned men should be employed upon it; that some should write treatises concerning it; that others should call up spirits about it; that thus, in short, heaven, earth, and hell should be sought to, for the decision of a question which terminates in curiosity only.

His Parents. If we endeavour to find the *parents*

of Homer, †the search is as fruitless. ‡Ephorus had made Mæon to be his father, by a niece whom he defloured; and this has so far obtained, as to give him the derivative name of Mæonides. His mother (if we allow the story of Mæon) is called Crytheis: but we are lost again in uncertainty, if we search farther; for Suidas has mentioned Eumetis or Polycaste; and §Pausanias, Clymene, or Themisto; which happens, because the contesting countries find

\* Xenophon *de Æquivocis*.

† Originally:—*We immediately perceive the search is fruitless.*"

W.

‡ Plut. *vitâ Hom. ex Ephoro*.

§ Pausanias, l. 10.



out mothers of their own for him. Tradition has in this case afforded us no more light than what may serve to show its shadows in confusion; they strike the sight with so equal a probability, that we are in doubt which to chuse, and must pass the question undecided.

If we enquire concerning his own *name*, even that is doubted of. He has His name. been called Melesigenes from the river where he was born. Homer has been reckoned an ascititious name, from some accident in his life: the Certamen Home-ricum calls him once Auletes, perhaps from his musical genius; and \*Lucian, Tigranes; it may be from a confusion with that Tigranes or †Tigretes, who was brother of Queen Artemisia, and whose name has been so far mingled with his, as to make him be esteemed author of some of the lesser works which are ascribed to Homer. It may not be amiss to close these criticisms with that agreeable derision wherewith Lucian treats the over-busy humour of Grammarians in their search after minute and impossible inquiries, when he feigns, that he had talked over the point with Homer in the *Island of the Blessed*. “ I asked him, says he, of what country “ he was? A question hard to be resolved with us; “ to which he answered, He could not certainly tell, “ because some had informed him, that he was of

\* Lucian's *true history*, l. 2.

† Suidas *de Tigrete*.

“ Chios, some of Smyrna, and others of Colophon ;  
 “ but he took himself for a Babylonian, and said  
 “ he was called Tigranes, while he lived among  
 “ his countrymen ; and Homer, while he was a  
 “ hostage among the Grecians.”

At his birth he appears not to have  
 His blindness. been *blind*, whatever he might be afterwards. The \* Chian medal of him (which is of great antiquity, according to Leo Allatius) seats him with a volume open, and reading intently. But there is no need of proofs from antiquity for that which every line of his works will demonstrate. With what an exactness, agreeable to the natural appearance of things, do his cities stand, his mountains rise, his rivers wind, and his regions lie extended ? How beautifully are the views of all things † drawn in their figures, and adorned with their paintings ? What address in action, what visible characters of the passions inspire his heroes ? It is not to be imagined, that a man could have been always blind, who thus inimitably copies nature, who gives every where the proper proportion, figure, colour, and life : “ *Quem si quis cæcum genitum*  
 “ *putat* (says ‡ Paterculus) *omnibus sensibus orbis*  
 “ *est :*” He must certainly have beheld the creation, considered it with a long attention, and enriched his

\* The medal is exhibited at the beginning of this essay.

† In the first edition :—“ the *surfaces* of all things.” W.

‡ Paterculus, l. 1.



fancy by the most sensible knowledge of those ideas which he makes the reader see while he but describes them.

As he grew forward in years, he was His Education trained up to learning (if we credit and Master.

\*Diodorus) under one “Pronapides, a man of excellent natural endowments, who taught the Pelasgick letter invented by Linus†.”

When he was of riper years, for his His travels. farther accomplishment and the gratification of his thirst of knowledge, he spent a considerable part of his time in travelling. Upon which account, ‡Proclus has taken notice that he must have been rich: “For long travels, says he, occasion high expences, and especially at those times when men could neither sail without imminent danger and inconveniences, nor had a regulated manner of commerce with one another.” This way of reasoning appears very probable; and if it does not prove him to have been rich, it shows him, at least, to have had patrons of a generous spirit; who observing the vastness of his capacity, believed themselves beneficent to mankind, while they sup-

\* Diod. Sic. l. 3.

† After *Linus*, there followed in the first edition:—“From him might he learn to preserve his poetry, by committing it to writing; which we mention, because it is generally believed no poems before his were so preserved; and he himself in the third line of his *Batrachomnómachia* (if that piece be allowed to be his) expressly speaks of writing his works in his tablets.” W.

‡ Procl. *vita* Hom.

ported one who seemed born for something extraordinary.

Ægypt being at that time the seat of learning, the greatest wits and geniuses of Greece used to travel thither. Among these \* Diodorus reckons Homer, and to strengthen his opinion alleges that multitude of their notions which he has received into his poetry, and of their customs, to which he alludes in his fictions: such as his *Gods*, which are named from the first *Egyptian Kings*; the number of the *Muses* taken from the *nine Minstrels* which attended *Osiris*; the *Feast* wherein they used to send their statues of their Deities into Æthiopia, and to return after twelve days; and the carrying their dead bodies over the lake to a pleasant place called Acherusia near Memphis, from whence arose the stories of Charon, Styx, and Elysium. These are notions which so abound in him, as to make † Herodotus say, He had introduced from thence the *religion* of Greece. And if others have believed he was an Ægyptian, from his knowledge of their rites and traditions, which were revealed but to few, and of the arts and customs which were practised among them in general; it may prove at least thus much, that he must have travelled there‡.

\* Diod. Sic. l. 1.

† Ἡσίοδον γὰρ καὶ Ὅμηρον ἑλικίαν τετρακοσίοις ἔτεσι δοκέω μὲν πρεσβυτέρους γενέσθαι, καὶ ἔπλεον· ἔτι δὲ εἰσὶ οἱ ποιήσαντες Θεοφονίην Ἑλληνισί, καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπωνυμίας δόντες, καὶ τιμὰς τε καὶ τέχνας διελόντες, καὶ εἰδὲα αὐτῶν ζημύσαντες. Herodot. l. 2.

‡ In the first edition, "that he was there in his travels." W.



As Greece was in all probability his native country, and had then begun to make an effort in learning, we cannot doubt but he travelled there also, with a particular observation. He used the different *dialects* which were spoken in its different parts, as one who had been conversant with them all. But the argument which appears most irrefragable is to be taken from his *catalogue* of the *ships*: he has there given us an exact *Geography* of Greece, where its cities, mountains, and plains, are particularly mentioned, where the courses of its rivers are traced out, where the countries are laid in order, their bounds assigned, and the uses of their soils specified. This the ancients, who compared it with the original, have allowed to be so true in all points that it could never have been owing to a loose and casual information: even Strabo's account of Greece is but a kind of commentary upon Homer's.

We may carry this argument farther, to suppose his having been round Asia Minor, from his exact division of the *Regnum Priami vetus* (as Horace calls it) into its separate Dynasties, and the account he gives of the bordering nations in alliance with it. Perhaps too, in the wanderings of Ulysses about Sicily, whose ports and neighbouring islands are mentioned, he might contrive to send his Hero where he had made his own voyage before. Nor will the fables he has intermingled be any objection to his having travelled in those parts, since they are not

related as the history of the present time, but the tradition of the former. His mention of Thrace, his description of the beasts of Lybia, and of the climate in the Fortunate Islands, may seem also to give us a view of him in the extremes of the earth, where it was not barbarous or uninhabited. It is hard to set limits to the travels of a man, who has set none to that desire of knowledge which made him undertake them. Who can say what people he has not seen, who appears to be versed in the customs of all? He takes the globe for the scene on which he introduces his subjects; he launches forward intrepidly, like one to whom no place is new, and appears a citizen of the world in general.

When he returned from his travels, he seems to have applied himself to the finishing of his Poems, however he might have either designed, begun, or pursued them before. In these he treasured up his various acquisitions of knowledge, where they have been preserved through many ages, to be as well the proofs of his own industry, as the instructions of posterity. He could then describe his sacrifices after the Æolian manner; or \*his leagues with a mixture of Trojan and Spartan ceremonies: †he could then compare the confusion of a multitude to that tumult he had observed in the Icarian sea, dashing and breaking among its crowd of islands: he could re-

\* Iliad, iii.

† Il. ii. verse 145.



present the numbers of an army, by those flocks of \*swans he had seen on the banks of the Cayster ; or being to describe that heat of battle with which Achilles drove the Trojans into the river,† he could illustrate it with an allusion from Cyrene or Cyprus, where, when the inhabitants burned their fields, the grasshoppers fled before the fire to perish in the Ocean. His fancy being fully replenished, might supply him with every proper occasional image ; and his soul after having enlarged itself, and taken in an extensive variety of the creation, might be equal to the task of an Iliad and an Odyssey.

In his old *age*, he fell blind, and settled at Chios, as he says in the His old age and death.

*Hymn to Apollo*, which (as is before observed) is acknowledged for his by Thucydides, and might occasion both Simonides and Theocritus to call him a Chian. ‡ Strabo relates, That Lycurgus, the great legislator of Sparta, was reported to have had a conference with Homer, after he had studied the laws of Crete and Ægypt, in order to form his constitutions. If this be true, how much a nobler representation does it give of him, and indeed more agreeable to what we conceive of this mighty genius, than those spurious accounts which keep him down among the meanest of mankind? What an idea could we frame to ourselves, of a conversation held

\* Iliad, ii. ver. 461.      † Il. xxi. ver. 12.      ‡ Strab. l. 10.

between two persons so considerable; a philosopher conscious of the force of poetry, and a poet knowing in the depths of philosophy; both their souls improved with learning, both eminently raised above little designs or the meaner kind of interest, and meeting together to consult the good of mankind! But in this I have only indulged a thought which is not to be insisted upon; the evidence of history rather tends to prove that Lycurgus brought his works from Asia after his death: which \*Proclus imagines to have happened at a great old age, on account of his vast extent of learning †, for which a short life could never suffice.

His character  
and manners.

If we would now make a conjecture concerning the genius and temper of this great man; perhaps his works, which would not furnish us with facts for his life, will be more reasonably made use of to give us a picture of his mind; to this end therefore, we may suffer the very name and notion of a book to vanish for a while, and look upon what is left us as a conversation, in order to gain an acquaintance with Homer. Perhaps the general air of his works will become the general character of his genius; and the particular observations give some light to the particular turns of his temper. His comprehensive knowledge shows that his soul was not formed like a narrow channel for a

\* Procl. *vitâ* Hom.

† The first edition has:—"his *circumference* of learning." W.



single stream, but as an expanse which might receive an ocean into its bosom ; that he had the strongest desire of improvement, and an unbounded curiosity, which made its advantage of every transient circumstance, or obvious accident. His solid and sententious manner may make us admire him for a man of judgment : one who, in the darkest ages, could enter far into a disquisition of human nature ; who, notwithstanding all the changes which governments, manners, rites, and even the notions of Virtue, have undergone, and notwithstanding the improvements since made in the Arts, could still abound with so many maxims correspondent to Truth, and notions applicable to so many Sciences. The fire, which is so observable in his Poem, as to give every thing the most active appearance, may make us naturally conjecture him to have been of a warm temper and lively behaviour ; and the pleasurable air which every where overspreads it, may give us reason to think, that fire of imagination was tempered with sweetness and affability. If we farther observe the particulars he treats of, and imagine that he laid a stress upon the Sentiments he delivers, pursuant to his real opinions ; we shall take him to be of a religious spirit, by his inculcating in almost every page the worship of the Gods. We shall imagine him to be a generous lover of his country, from his care to extol it every where ; which is carried to such a height, as

to make \* Plutarch observe, that though many of the Barbarians are made prisoners or suppliants, yet neither of these disgraceful accidents (which are common to all nations in war) ever happens to one Greek throughout his works. We shall take him to be a compassionate lover of mankind, from his numberless praises of hospitality and charity; (if indeed we are not to account for them, as the common writers of his life imagine, from his owing his support to these virtues). It might seem from his love of stories, with his manner of telling them sometimes, that he gave his own picture when he painted his Nestor, and, as wise as he was, was no enemy to talking. One would think from his praises of wine, his copious goblets, and pleasing descriptions of banquets, that he was addicted to a cheerful, sociable life, which Horace takes notice of as a kind of tradition :

“ *Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.*”—

*Ep.* 19. *l.* 1.

And that he was not (as may be guessed of Virgil from his works) averse to the *female sex*; will appear from his care to paint them amiably upon all occasions : his Andromache and Penelope are in each of his Poems most shining characters of conjugal affection ; even his Helena herself is drawn with all the softnings imaginable ; his soldiers are exhorted to combat

\* Plutarch *de Aud. Poetis.*



with the hopes of *women*; his commanders are furnished with *fair slaves* in their tents, nor is the venerable Nestor without a *mistress*.

It is true, that in this way of turning a *book* into a *man*, this reasoning from his works to himself, we can at best but hit off a few out-lines of a character\*: wherefore I shall carry it no farther, but conclude with one *discovery* which we may make from his *silence*; a discovery extremely proper to be made in this manner, which is, That he was of a very modest temper. There is in all other Poets a custom of speaking of themselves, and a vanity of promising eternity to their writings, in both which Homer, who has the best title to speak out, is altogether silent. As to the last of them, the world has made him ample recompence; it has given him that eternity he would not promise himself; but whatever endeavours have been offered in respect of the former, we find ourselves still under an irreparable loss. That which others have said of him has amounted to no more than conjecture; that which I have said is no farther to be insisted on: I have used the liberty which may be indulged me by precedent, to give my own opinions, among the accounts of others, and the world may be pleased to receive them as so many willing endeavours to gratify its curiosity.

\* It stood thus in the first edition:—"a few *out-strokes* of a character: wherefore I shall *decline the carrying* it into more minute *points, and conclude—*."

Catalogue of his Works. The only uncontestable works which

Homer has left behind him are the *Iliad* and *Odysses*; the *Batrachomyomachia*, or *Battle of the frogs and mice*, has been disputed, but is however allowed for his by many authors; amongst whom \*Statius has reckoned it like the *Culex* of Virgil, a trial of his force before his greater performances. It is indeed a beautiful piece of raillery, in which a great writer might delight to unbend himself: an instance of that agreeable trifling, which has been some time or other indulged by the finest geniuses, and the offspring of that amusing and cheerful humour which generally accompanies the character of a rich imagination, like a vein of *Mercury* running mingled with a mine of *Gold*.

The *Hymns* have been doubted also, and attributed by the Scholiasts to Cynæthus the Rhapsodist; but neither †Thucydides, ‡Lucian, nor §Pausanias, have scrupled to cite them as genuine||. We have the authority of the two former for that to Apollo, though it be observed that the word Νῶμος is found in it, which the book *de Poesi Homerica* (ascribed to Plu-

\* Statius *Præf. ad Sylv.* 1.

† Thucyd. l. 3.

‡ Lucian. *Phalarid.* 2.

§ Pausan. *Bæotic.*

|| This amounts to no proof at all: the artificers of these hymns would not fail to favour the imposture by interweaving in the fabric such materials, as approved ancients had produced from the genuine compositions: and certain peculiarities of language, and innovations in the quantity of words upon the uniform usage of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, are incontestable proofs of a later fabrication. W.



tarch) tells us, was not in use in Homer's time. We have also an authority of the last for a \* *Hymn* to Ceres, of which he has given us a fragment. That to Mars is objected against for mentioning Τύραννος, and that which is the first to Minerva, for using Τυχὴ, both of them being (according to the author of the treatise before mentioned) words of a later invention. The *Hymn* to Venus has many of its lines copied by Virgil, in the interview between Æneas and that Goddess in the first Æneid. But whether these Hymns are Homer's, or not, they are always judged to be near as ancient, if not of the same age with him.

The *Epigrams* are extracted out of the life said to be written by Herodotus, and we leave them as such to stand or fall with it; except the epitaph on Midas, which is very ancient, quoted without its author both by † Plato and ‡ Longinus, and (according to § Laertius) ascribed by Simonides to Cleobulus the wise man; who, living after Homer, answers better to the age of Midas the son of Gordias.

The *Margites*, which is lost, is said by || Aristotle to have been a Poem of a comic nature, wherein Homer made use of *Iambick* verses as proper for railery. It was a jest upon the fair sex, and had its name from one Margites, a weak man, who was the subject of it. The story is something loose, as may

\* Paus. *Messen*. † Plat. *in Phæd*. ‡ Longin. § 36. *Edit. Tollii*.  
§ Laertius *in vitâ* Cleobuli. || Arist. *Poet*. cap. 4.

be seen by the account of it still preserved in \* Eustathius's Comment on the *Odysses*.

The *Cercopes* was a satirical work, which is also lost: we may however imagine it was levelled against the vices of men, if our conjecture be right that it was founded upon the † old fable of *Cercopes*, a nation who were turned into *monkies* for their frauds and impostures.

The *Destruction of Oechalia*, was a Poem, of which (according to Eustathius) Hercules was the Hero; and the subject, his ravaging that country; because Eurytus the King had denied him his daughter Iöle.

The *Ilias Minor* was a piece which included both the taking of Troy and the return of the Grecians: in this was the story of *Sinon*, which Virgil has made use of. ‡ Aristotle has judged it not to belong to Homer.

The *Cypriacks*, if it was upon them that Nævius founded his *Ilias Cypria*, (as § Mr. Dacier conjectures) were the *love adventures* of the ladies at the siege: these are rejected by || Herodotus, for saying that Paris brought Helen to Troy in three days; whereas Homer asserts they were long driven from place to place.

There are other things ascribed to him, such as the

\* Eustath. in *Odyss.* 10.

† Ovid. *Metam.* l. 14. de *Cercop.*

‡ Arist. *Poet.* cap. 24.

§ Dac. on Arist. *Poet.* cap. 24.

|| Hesiod. l. 2.



*Heptapection* goat, the *Arachnomachia*, &c. in the ludicrous manner; and the *Thebais*, *Epigoni*, or second siege of *Thebes*, the *Phocais*, *Amazonia*, &c. in the serious: which, if they were his, are to be reputed a real loss to the learned world. Time, in some things, may have prevailed over Homer himself, and left only the names of these works, as memorials that such were in being; but while the *Iliad* and *Odysses* remain, he seems like a leader, who\*, though in his attempt of universal Conquest he may have lost his advanced guards, or some few stragglers in the rear, yet with his main body ever victorious, passes in triumph through all ages.

The remains we have at present, of <sup>Monuments,</sup> those Monuments Antiquity had framed <sup>Coin, Marbles,</sup> for him, are but few. It could not be <sup>remaining of</sup> him. thought that they who knew so little of the *life* of Homer, could have a right knowledge of his *person*: yet they had statues of him as of their Gods, whose forms they had never seen. “*Quinimò quæ non sunt, finguntur* (says † Pliny) *pariuntque desideria non traditi vultûs, sicut in Homero evenit.*” But though the ancient portraits of him seem purely notional, yet they agree (as I think ‡ Fabretti has

\* This paragraph is much improved from the first edition:—  
“who though he may have *failed in a skirmish, has carried a victory, for which* he passes in triumph through all *future* ages.” W.

† Pliny, l. 35, c. 2.

‡ Raph. Fabret. *Explicatio Veteris Tabellæ Anaglyphæ Hom. Iliad.*

observed) in representing him with a short curled beard, and distinct marks of age in his forehead. That which is prefixed to this book, is taken from an ancient marble bust, in the palace of Farnese at Rome.

In Bollissus near Chios there is a ruin, which was shewn for the house of Homer, which \*Leo Allatius went on pilgrimage to visit, and (as he tells us) found nothing but a few stones crumbling away with age, over which he and his companions wept for satisfaction.

They erected Temples to Homer in Smyrna, as appears from † Cicero; one of these is supposed to be yet extant, and the same which they shew for the temple of Janus. It agrees with ‡ Strabo's description, a square building of stone, near a river, thought to be the Meles, with two doors opposite to each other, North and South, and a large niche within the east wall, where the image stood: but M. Spon denies this to be the true *Homerium*.

Of the medals struck for him, there are some both of Chios and Smyrna still in being, and exhibited at the beginning of this Essay. The most valuable with respect to the largeness of the head, is that of Amastris, which is carefully copied from an original belonging to the present Earl of Pembroke, and is

\* Leo. Allat. *de patria Hom.* cap. 13. † Cicero *pro Archia*.

‡ Strabo, l. 14, Τὸ Ὀμηρεῖον εἰς τὰ τετραγώνια ἔχουσα τῶν Ὀμήρου καὶ ἑοράων, &c. *de Smyrna*.



the same which Gronovius, Cuperus, and Dacier have copies of, but very incorrectly performed.

But that which of all the remains has been of late the chief amusement of the learned, is the marble called his *Apotheosis*, the work of Archelaus of Prienne, and now in the palace of Colonna. We see there a Temple hung with its veil, where Homer is placed on a seat with a footstool to it, as he has described the seats of his Gods; supported on each side with figures representing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssees*, the one by a sword, the other by the ornaments of a ship, which denotes the voyages of Ulysses. On each side of his foot-stool are *mice*, in allusion to the *Batrachomyomachia*. Behind is *Time* waiting upon him, and a figure with turrets on his head, which signifies the *World*, crowning him with the Laurel. Before him is an altar, at which all the *Arts* are sacrificing to him as to their Deity. On one side of the altar stands a boy, representing *Mythology*; on the other a woman, representing *History*: after her is *Poetry* bringing the *sacred fire*; and in a long following train, *Tragedy*, *Comedy*, *Nature*, *Virtue*, *Memory*, *Rhetorick*, and *Wisdom*, all in their proper Attitudes.

## SECT. II.

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HAVING now finished what was proposed concerning the history of Homer's life, I shall proceed to that of his works ; and considering him no longer as a *Man*, but as an *Author*, prosecute the thread of his story in this his second life, through the different degrees of esteem which those writings have obtained in different periods of time.

It has been the fortune of several great geniuses not to be known while they lived, either for want of historians, the meanness of fortune, or the love of retirement, to which a poetical temper is peculiarly addicted. Yet after death their works give themselves a life in Fame, without the help of an historian ; and, notwithstanding the meanness of their author, or his love of retreat, they go forth among mankind, the glories of that age which produced them, and the delight of those which follow it. This is a fate particularly verified in Homer, than whom no considerable author is less known as to himself, or more highly valued as to his productions.

The first publication of his Works by Lycurgus.

The earliest account of these is said by \* Plutarch to be some time after his death, when Lycurgus sailed to Asia :

\* Plut. *vit.* Lycurgi.



“ There he had the first sight of Homer’s works,  
“ which were probably preserved by the grand-  
“ children of Creophilus ; and having observed that  
“ their pleasurable air of fiction did not hinder the  
“ poet’s abounding in maxims of state, and rules of  
“ morality, he transcribed and carried with him that  
“ entire collection we have now among us.” For at  
“ that time (continues this author) there was only an  
“ obscure rumour in Greece to the reputation of these  
“ Poems, and but a few scattered fragments handed  
“ about, ’till Lycurgus published them entire.” Thus  
they were in danger of being lost as soon as they  
were produced, by the misfortune of the age, a want  
of taste for learning, or the manner in which they  
were left to posterity, when they fell into the hands  
of Lycurgus. He was a man of great learning, a  
law-giver to a people divided and untractable, and  
one who had a notion that poetry influenced and  
civilized the minds of men ; which made him smooth  
the way to his constitution by the songs of Thales the  
Cretan, whom he engaged to write upon obedi-  
ence and concord. As he proposed to himself, that  
the constitution he would raise upon this their union  
should be of a martial nature, these poems were of  
an extraordinary value to him : for they came with  
a full force into his scheme ; the moral they inspired  
was unity ; the air they breathed was martial ; and  
their story had this particular engagement for the  
Lacedæmonians, that it shewed Greece in war, and

Asia subdued under the conduct of one of their own Monarchs, who commanded all the Grecian Princes. Thus the Poet both pleased the law-giver and the people; from whence he had a double influence when the laws were settled. For his Poem then became a Panegyrick on their constitution, as well as a Register of their glory; and confirmed them in the love of it by a gallant description of those qualities and actions for which it was adapted. This made \* Cleomenes call him *The Poet of the Lacedæmonians*: and therefore when we remember that Homer owed the publication of his works to Lycurgus, we should grant too, that Lycurgus owed in some degree the enforcement of his laws to the works of Homer.

At their first appearance in Greece, Their reception in Greece. they were not reduced † into a regular body, but remained as they were brought over, in several separate pieces, called (according to ‡ Ælian) from the subject on which they treated; as the *battle at the ships, the death of Dolon, the valour of Agamemnon, the Patroclea, the grot of Calypso, the slaughter of the Wooers*, and the like. Nor were these entitled *Books*, but *Rhapsodies* §; from

\* Plutarch, *Apophtheg.*

† *Reduced*: in the first edition, *digested*; a word more applicable to something originally confused, and therefore judiciously supplanted by one, that inferred a *restitution* to order and regularity. W.

‡ Ælian, l. 13. cap. 14.

§ That is, poetry, or songs, stitched in detached portions, by a



whence they who sung them had the title of *Rhapsodists*. It was in this manner they began to be dispersed, while their poetry, their history, the glory they ascribed to Greece in general, the particular description they gave of it, and the compliment they paid to every little state by an honourable mention, so influenced all, that they were transcribed and sung with general approbation. But what seems to have most recommended them was, that Greece, which could not be great in its divided condition, looked upon the fable of them as a likely plan of future grandeur. They seem from thenceforward to have had an eye upon the conquest of Asia, as a proper undertaking, which by its importance might occasion union enough to give a diversion from civil wars, and by its prosecution bring in an acquisition of honour and empire. This is the meaning of \* Isocrates, when he tell us, “ That Homer’s poetry was “ in the greater esteem, because it gave exceeding “ praise to those who fought against the Barbarians. “ Our ancestors (continues he) honoured it with a

division of the entire work ; whence the modern application of the term to *wild* and *incoherent* effusions, in a disparaging acceptance. W.

\* Οἶμαι δὲ καὶ τὴν Ὀμήρου ποιήσιν μείζω λαβεῖν δόξαν, ὅτι καλῶς τὰς πολέμησαντας τοῖς βαρβάροις ἐνεκαμύιασε· καὶ διὰ τὸ το βεληθῆναι τῆς Προχόνος ἡμῶν ἐντιμὸν αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι τὴν τέχνην, ἐν τε τοῖς τῆς μουσικῆς ἀθλαῖς καὶ τῇ παιδεύσει τῶν νεωτέρων· ἵνα πολλάκις ἀκόντες τῶν ἐπῶν, ἐκμανθάνωμεν τὴν ἔχθραν τὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχουσαν, καὶ ζηλῶντες τὰς ἀρετὰς τῶν στρατεύσασαντων ἐπὶ Τροίαν τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων ἐκείνοις ἐπιθυμῶμεν.— Isocrat. *Paneg.*

“ place in education and musical contests, that by  
 “ often hearing it we should have a notion of an  
 “ original enmity between us and those nations ; and  
 “ that admiring the virtue of those who fought at  
 “ Troy, we should be induced to emulate their glory.”  
 And indeed they never quitted this thought, till they  
 had successfully carried their arms wherever Homer  
 might thus excite them.

Digested into      But while his works were suffered to  
 order at Athens.      lie in a distracted \* manner, the chain  
 of story was not always perceived, so that they lost  
 much of their force and beauty by being read dis-  
 orderly. Wherefore as Lacedæmon had the first  
 honour of their publication by Lycurgus, that of their  
 regulation fell to the share of Athens in the time of  
 † Solon, who himself made a law for their recital.  
 It was then that Pisistratus, the Tyrant of Athens,  
 who was a man of great learning and eloquence, (as  
 † Cicero has it) first put together the confused parts  
 of Homer, according to that regularity in which they  
 are now handed down to us. He divided them into  
 the two different Works, entitled the Iliad and  
 Odyssees ; he digested each according to the Author's

\* In the first edition :—“ an *unconnected* manner.”

W.

† Diog. Laert. *vit.* Sol.

‡ Quis doctior iisdem illis temporibus, aut cujus eloquentia  
 literis instructor quàm Pisistrati? Qui primus Homeri libros, con-  
 fusos antea, sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus. Cic. de Orat.  
 l. 3. Vide etiam Æl. 13. cap. 14. Liban. Panegy. in Jul. Anonymam  
 Homeri vitam. Fusiùs verò in Commentatoribus Dyon. Thracis.



design, to make their plans become evident; and distinguished each again into twenty-four books, to which were afterwards prefixed the twenty-four letters. There is a passage indeed in \*Plato, which takes this Work from Pisistratus, by giving it to his son Hipparchus; with this addition, that he commanded them to be sung at the feast called Pan-athenæa. Perhaps it may be, as †Leo Allatius has imagined, because the son published the copy more correctly: this he offers, to reconcile so great a testimony as Plato's to the cloud of witnesses which are against him in it: but be that as it will, Athens still claims its proper honour of rescuing the father of learning from the injuries of time, of having restored Homer to himself, and given the world a view of him in his perfection. So that if his verses were before admired for their *use* and *beauty*, as the stars were, before they were considered scientifically as a system‡, they are now admired much more for their graceful harmony, and that sphere of order in which they appear to move. They became thenceforward more the pleasure of the wits of Greece, more the subject of their studies, and the employment of their pens.

About the time that this new edition of Homer

\* Plato in Hipparcho.

† Leo Allatius *de Patriâ* Hom. cap. 5.

‡ Originally:—"as the stars were, before they were considered in a system of science, they are—." And the reader will admire with me, not the elegance only, but the sublimity of this comparison.

was published in Athens, there was one Cynæthus, a learned Rhapsodist, who (as the \* Scholiast of Pindar informs us) settled first at Syracuse in that employment; and if (as Leo Allatius believes) he had been before an assistant in the edition, he may be supposed to have first carried it abroad. But it was not long preserved correct among his followers; they committed mistakes in their transcriptions and repetitions, and had even the presumption to alter some lines, and interpolate others. Thus the works of Homer ran the danger of being utterly defaced; which made it become the concern of Kings and Philosophers, that they should be restored to their primitive beauty.

The edition in Macedon under Alexander. In the front of these is Alexander the Great, for whom they will appear peculiarly calculated, if we consider that no books more enliven or flatter personal valour, which was great in him to what we call romantick: neither has any book more places applicable to his designs on Asia, or (as it happened) to his actions there. It was then no ill compliment in † Aristotle to purge the Iliad, upon his account, from those errors and additions which had crept into it. And so far was Alexander himself from esteeming it a matter of small importance, that he afterwards ‡ assisted in a

\* Schol. Pind. in *Nem.* Od. 2.

† Plut. in *vitâ Alexandri.*

‡ Φέρεται γέν τις διόρθωσις τῆς Ὀμήρου ποιήσεως ἢ ἐκ τῶ Νάρθηκος λειομένη τῶ Ἀλεξάνδρου μετὰ τῶ περὶ Καλλισθένην καὶ Ἀνάξαρχον ἐπελθόντων,



strict review of it with Anaxarchus and Callisthenes; whether it was merely because he esteemed it a treasury of military virtue and knowledge; or that (according to a late ingenious conjecture) he had a farther aim in promoting the propagation of it, when he was ambitious to be esteemed a son of Jupiter, as a book which treating of the sons of the Gods, might make the intercourse between them and mortals become a familiar notion. The review being finished, he laid it up in a casket, which was found among the spoils of Darius, as what best deserved so inestimable a case; and from this circumstance it was named, *The Edition of the Casket*.

The place where the works of Homer were next found in the greatest regard, Editions in  
Ægypt. is Ægypt, under the reign of the Ptolemies. These Kings being descended from Greece, retained always a passion for their original country. The men, the books, the qualifications of it, were in esteem in their court; they preserved the language in their family; they encouraged a concourse of learned men; erected the greatest library in the world; and trained up their princes under Grecian tutors; among whom the most considerable were appointed for revisers of Homer. The first of these was \*Zenodotus, library-keeper to the first Ptolemy, and qualified for this

ἡ Σημειωσαμένης ἔπειτα καταθέντος εἰς Νάρθηκα ὃν εὗρεν ἐν Περσικῇ  
γὰρ πολυτελῶς κατεσκευασμένον. Strabo, lib. 13.

\* Suidas.

undertaking by being both a Poet and a Grammarian: a compounded character, in which there was fancy for a discovery of beauties, and a minuter judgment for a detection of faults. But neither his copy nor that which his disciple Aristophanes had made, satisfying Aristarchus, (whom Ptolemy Philometor had appointed over his son Euergetes,) he set himself to another correction with all the wit and learning he was master of. He restored some verses to their former readings, rejected others, which he marked with *obelisks* as spurious, and proceeded with such industrious accuracy, that, notwithstanding there were some who wrote against his performance, antiquity has generally acquiesced in it. Nay, so far have they carried their opinion in his favour, as to call a man an Aristarchus, when they meant to say a candid, judicious Critick\*; in the same manner as they call the contrary a Zoilus, from that Zoilus who about this time wrote an envious criticism against Homer. And now we mention these two together, I fancy it will be no small pleasure to the benevolent part of mankind, to see how their fortunes and characters stand in contrast to each other, for examples to future ages, at the head of the two contrary sorts of criticism, which proceed from good-nature, or from ill-will. The one was honoured with the offices

\* Rather, a precise, discerning, and judicious critic; who shewed no indulgence to false sentiment, ill-constructed verse, or vicious composition.



and countenance of the court; the other\*, when he applied to the same place for an encouragement amongst the men of learning, had his petition rejected with contempt. The one had his fame continued to posterity; the other is only remembered with infamy. If the one had antagonists, they were obliged to pay him the deference of a formal answer; the other was never answered but in general, with those opprobrious names of *Thracian slave* and *rhetorical dog*. The one is supposed to have his copy still remaining; while the other's remarks are perished†, as things that men were ashamed to preserve; the just desert of whatever arises from the miserable principles of ill-will or envy.

It was not the ambition of Ægypt only to have a correct edition of Homer. In Syria and other parts of Asia. We find in the life of ‡the poet Aratus, that he having finished a copy of the *Odyssey*, was sent for by Antiochus king of Syria, and entertained by him while he finished one of the *Iliad*. We read too of others which were published with the names of countries; such as the §*Massaliothick* and *Sinopick*; as if the world were agreed to make his works in their

\* Vitruv. l. 7, in *Proem*.

† Not altogether: one of his sayings, for example, is preserved by Longinus in the 9th section of his treatise on the sublime; who tells us that Zoilus, alluding to *Odyss. x. 241*. called the companions of Ulysses, whom Circe transformed into swine, *weeping porkets*. W.

‡ *Author vitæ Arati*, et Suidas in *Arato*.

§ Eustathius *initio Iliados*.

revival undergo the same fate with himself; and that as different cities contended for his birth, so they might again contend for his true edition. But though these reviews were not confined to Ægypt, the greatest honour was theirs, in that universal approbation which the performance of Aristarchus received; and if it be not his edition which we have at present, we know not to whom to ascribe it.

In India and Persia. But the world was not contented

barely to have settled an edition of his works. There were innumerable comments, in which they were opened like a treasury of learning; and translations, whereby other languages became enriched by an infusion of his spirit of poetry. \*Ælian tells us, that even the Indians had them in their tongue, and the Persian kings sung them in theirs. †Persius mentions a version into Latin by Labeo; and in general the passages and imitations which are taken from him are so numerous, that he may be said to have been translated by piece-meal into that and all other languages: which affords us this remark, that there is hardly any thing in him which has not been pitched upon by some author or other for a particular beauty.

The extent and height of their reputation in the Heathen world. It is almost incredible to what an height the idea of that veneration the ancients paid to Homer will arise, to one who reads particularly with this

\* Ælian, l. 12. cap. 48.

† Persius, Sat. 1.



view, through all these periods. He was no sooner come from his obscurity, but Greece received him with delight and profit: there were then but few books to divide their attention, and none which had a better title to engross it all. They made some daily discoveries of his beauties, which were still promoted in their different channels by the favourite qualities of different nations. Sparta and Macedon considered him most in respect of his *warlike spirit*; Athens and Ægypt with regard to his *poetry* and *learning*; and all their endeavours united under the hands of the learned, to make him blaze forth into an universal character. His works, which from the beginning passed for excellent *poetry*, grew to be *history* and *geography*; they rose to be a *magazine* of *sciences*; were exalted into a *scheme* of *religion*; gave a sanction to whatever rites they mentioned, were quoted in all cases for the conduct of private life, and the decision of all questions of the law of nations; nay, learned by heart as the very book of belief and practice. From him the *Poets* drew their inspirations, the *Criticks* their rules, and the *Philosophers* a defence of their opinions. Every author was fond to use his name, and every profession writ books upon him, till they swelled to libraries. The warriors formed themselves by his *Heroes*, and the oracles delivered his verses for answers. Nor was mankind satisfied to have thus seated his character at the top of human wisdom, but being overborne with an imagi-

nation that he transcended their species, they admitted him to share in those honours they gave the Deities. They instituted games for him, dedicated statues, erected temples, as at Smyrna, Chios, and Alexandria; and \*Ælian tells us, that when the Argives sacrificed with their guests, they used to invoke the presence of Apollo and Homer together.

The decline of their character in the beginning of Christianity. Thus he was settled on a foot of adoration, and continued highly venerated in the Roman empire, when Christianity began. Heathenism was

then to be destroyed, and Homer appeared the father of it; whose fictions were at once the belief of the Pagan religion, and the objections of Christianity against it. He became therefore very deeply involved in the question; and not with that honour which hitherto attended him, but as a criminal who had drawn the world into folly. He was on one hand accused for having framed †fables upon the works of Moses; as the rebellion of the giants from the building of Babel, and the casting *Ate* or *Strife* out of heaven from the fall of Lucifer. He was exposed on the other hand for those which he is said to invent, as when ‡Arnobius cries out, “ This is the man who “ wounded your Venus, imprisoned your Mars, who “ freed even your Jupiter by Briareus, and who finds “ authorities for all your vices,” &c. Mankind was

\* Ælian, l. 9. cap. 15. † Justin Martyr, *Admonit. ad Gentes*.

‡ Arnobius *adversus Gentes*, l. 7.



\*derided for whatever he had hitherto made them believe; and †Plato, who expelled him his commonwealth, has, of all the Philosophers, found the best quarter from the fathers, for passing that sentence. His finest beauties began to take a new appearance of pernicious qualities; and because they might be considered as allurements to fancy, or supports to those errors with which they were mingled, they were to be depreciated while the contest of faith was in being. It was hence, that the reading them was discouraged, that we hear Rufinus accusing St. Jerome for it, and that ‡St. Austin rejects him as the grand master of fable; though indeed the *dulcissimè vanus* which he applies to Homer, looks but like a fondling manner of parting with them.

This strong attack against our author, as the great bulwark of Paganism, obliged those Philosophers who could have acquiesced as his admirers, to appear as his defenders; who because they saw the fables could not be literally supported, endeavoured to find a hidden sense, and to carry on every where that vein of *allegory*, which was already broken open with success in some places. But how miserably were they forced to shifts, when they made §Juno's dressing in the Cestus for Jupiter, to signify the purging of the

\* *Vid. Tertull. Apol. cap. 14.*

† Arnobius, *ibid.* Eusebius, *Præp. Evangel.* l. 14. cap. 10.

‡ St. August. *Confess.* l. 1. cap. 14.

§ Plutarch *on reading the Poets.*

*air* as it approached the *fire* ! Or the story of Mars and Venus, that inclination they have to incontinency who are born when these planets are in conjunction ! Wit and learning had here a large field to display themselves, and to disagree in ; for sometimes Jupiter, and sometimes Vulcan was made to signify the *fire* ; or Mars and Venus were allowed to give us a lecture of *Morality* at one time, and a problem of *Astronomy* at another. And these strange discoveries, which *Porphyry*\* and the rest would have to pass for the genuine *theology* of the Greeks, prove but (as Eusebius† terms it) the perverting of fables into a mystick sense. They did indeed often defend Homer, but then they allegorized away their Gods by doing so. What the world took for substantial objects of adoration, dissolved before its eyes into a figurative meaning, a moral truth, or a piece of learning, which might equally correspond to any religion ; and the learned at last had left themselves nothing to worship, when they came to find an object in Christianity.

Restoration of  
Homer's works  
to their just character.

The dispute of faith being over, ancient learning reassumed its dignity, and Homer obtained his proper place in the esteem of mankind. His books are now no longer the scheme of a living religion, but become the register of one of former times. They are not now received for a rule of life, but valued for those just

\* Porphyrius *de Antro Nymph.*, &c.

† Eusebii *Præpar. Evangel.* l. 3. cap. 1.



observations which are dispersed through them. They are no longer pronounced from oracles, but quoted still by authors for their learning. Those remarks which the Philosophers made upon them have their weight with us; those beauties which the Poets dwelt upon, their admiration: and even after the abatement of what was extravagant in his run of praise, he remains confessedly a mighty genius, not transcended by any which have since arisen; a Prince\*, as well as a Father, of *Poetry*.

\* According to the testimony of those glorious verses in Lucretius, book iii:

Adde repertores doctrinarum atque leporum,  
Adde Heliconiadum comites; quorum unus Homerus,  
Sceptra potitus, eâdem aliis sopitus quiete est:

which Dryden has rendered in his free and desultory manner, but  
“with a master’s hand and prophet’s fire:”

The founders of invented arts are lost,  
And wits, who made eternity their boast.  
Where now is Homer, who possess’d the throne?  
The’ immortal work remains, the’ immortal author gone!  
W.

## S E C T. III.

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A view of the learning of Homer's time. **I**T remains in this historical essay, to regulate our present opinion of Homer by a view of his learning, compared with that of his age. For this end he may first be considered as a poet, that character which was his professedly ; and secondly as one endowed with other sciences, which must be spoken of, not as in themselves, but as in subserviency to his main design. Thus he will be seen on his right foot of perfection in one view, and with the just allowances which should be made on the other. While we pass through the several heads of science, the state of those times in which he writ will show us both the impediments he rose under, and the reasons why several things in him, which have been objected to, either could not, or should not, be otherwise than they are.

In Poetry. As for the state of *Poetry*, it was at a low pitch in the age of Homer. There is mention of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, venerable names in antiquity, and eminently celebrated in fable for the wonderful power of their songs and musick.

The learned Fabricius, in his *Bibliotheca Græca*, has reckoned about seventy who are said to have written before Homer ; but their works were not pre-



served, and that is a sort of proof they were not excellent\*. What sort of Poets Homer saw in his own time, may be gathered from his description of † Demodocus and Phemius, whom he has introduced as opportunities to celebrate his profession. The imperfect risings of the art lay then among the *extempore* singers of stories at banquets, who were half singers, half musicians. Nor was the name of poet then in being, or once used throughout Homer's works. From this poor state of poetry, he has taken a handle to usher it into the world with the boldest stroke of praise which has ever been given it. It is in the eighth Odyssey, where Ulysses puts Demodocus upon a trial of skill. Demodocus having diverted the guests with some actions of the Trojan war; “ † All this (says Ulysses) you have sung very elegantly, as if you had either been present, or heard it reported; but pass now to a subject I shall give you, sing the management of Ulysses in the wooden horse, just as it happened, and I will acknowledge the Gods have taught you your songs.” This the singer, being inspired from heaven, begins immediately, and Ulysses by weeping at the recital confesses the truth of it. We see here a narration which could only pass upon an age extremely ig-

\* Thus at first:—“but their works were not preserved, and can only be considered (if they were really excellent) as the happiness of their own generation.” W.

† Od. 1st and Od. 8th.

† Odyss. l. viii. ver. 487, &c.

norant in the nature of Poetry, where that claim of inspiration is given to it which it has never since laid down, and (which is more) a power of prophesying at pleasure ascribed to it. Thus much therefore we gather from himself, concerning the most ancient state of Poetry in Greece; that no one was honoured with the name of Poet, before him whom it has especially belonged to ever after. And if we farther appeal to the consent of authors, we find he has other titles for being called the first. \* Josephus observes, That the Greeks have not contested but he was the most ancient, whose books they had in writing. † Aristotle says, He was the “first who brought all the parts of a poem into one piece,” to which he adds, “and with true judgment,” to give him a praise including both the invention and perfection‡. Whatever was serious or magnificent made a part of his subject: war and peace were the comprehensive division in which he considered the world; and the plans of his poems were founded on the most active scenes of each, the adventures of a siege, and the accidents of a voyage. For these his spirit was equally active and various, lofty in expression,

\* Joseph. *contra* Appion, l. 1. † Arist. *Poet.* cap. 25.

‡ This followed in the first edition:—“And Horace acquaints us, that he invented the very measure which is called *Heroick* from the subjects on which he employed it:

“*Res gestæ regumque, ducumque, et fortia bella,*  
“*Quo scribi possint numero monstravit Homerus.*”

Which he properly suppressed, as too strong a conclusion for the premises. W.



clear in narration, natural in description, rapid in action, abundant in figures. If ever he appears less than himself, it is from the time he writ in ; and if he runs into errors, it is from an excess, rather than a defect of genius. Thus he rose over the poetical world, shining out like a sun all at once ; which if it sometimes makes too *faint* an appearance, it is to be ascribed only to the unkindness of the season that clouds and obscures it\*, and if he is sometimes too *violent*, we confess at the same time that we owe all things to his heat.

As for his *Theology*, we see the Theology.  
Heathen system entirely followed. This was all he could then have to work upon, and where he fails of truth for want of revelation, he at least shews his knowledge in his own religion by the traditions he delivers. But we are now upon a point to be farther handled, because the greatest controversy concerning the merit of Homer depends upon it. Let us consider then, that there was an age in Greece, when natural reason only discovered in general, that there must be something superior to us, and corrupt tradition had affixed the notion to a number of deities. At this time Homer rose with the finest turn imaginable for poetry, who designing to instruct mankind in the manner for which he was most adapted †,

\* It stood originally thus:—"is to be ascribed only to the necessity of the season, that keeps it at a distance ; and if—." W,

† Thus in the first edition:—"adapted, writ poems wherein he

made use of the ministry of the Gods to give the highest air of veneration to his writings. He found the religion of mankind consisting of Fables; and their Morality and Political Instruction delivered in Allegories. Nor was it his business when he undertook the province of a Poet, (not of a mere Philosopher) to be the first who should discard that which furnishes Poetry with its most beautiful appearance: and especially, since the age he lived in, by discovering its taste, had not only given him authority, but even put him under the necessity of preserving it. Whatever therefore he might think of his Gods, he took them as he found them: he brought them into action according to the notions which were then entertained, and in such stories as were then believed; unless we imagine so great an absurdity, as that he invented every thing he delivers. Yet there are several rays of truth streaming through all this darkness, in those sentiments he entertains concerning the Providence of the Gods, delivered in several allegories lightly veiled over, from whence the learned afterwards pretended to draw new knowledges, each according to his power of penetration and fancy. But that we may the better comprehend

“ made use of the ministry of the gods to give the highest air of  
 “ *surprize* and veneration to his writings. He found the religion  
 “ of mankind *wrapt up in fables; it was thought then the easiest*  
 “ *way to convey morals to the people, who were allured to attention*  
 “ *by pleasure, and awed with the opinion of a hidden mystery.*  
 “ Nor was it—.”

W.



him in all the parts of this general view, let us extract from him a scheme of his religion.

He has a Jupiter, *a father of Gods and men*, to whom he applies several attributes, as wisdom, justice, knowledge, power, &c. which are essentially inherent to the idea of a God. \* He has given him two *vessels*, out of which he distributes natural *good or evil* for the life of man: he places the Gods in council round him; he makes † *Prayers* pass to and fro before him; and mankind adore him with sacrifice. But all this grand appearance wherein poetry paid a deference to reason, is dashed and mingled with the imperfection of our nature; not only with the applying our passions to the Supreme Being (for men have always been treated with this compliance to their notions) but that he is not even exempted from our common appetites and frailties: for he is made to eat, drink and sleep: but this his admirers would imagine to be only a grosser way of representing a general notion of happiness, because he says in one place ‡, that the food of the Gods was not of the same nature with ours. But upon the whole, while he endeavoured to speak of a deity without a right information, he was forced to take him from that image he discovered in *man*; and (like one who, being dazzled with the sun in the heavens, would view him as he is reflected in a river) he has taken

\* Iliad, xxiv. ver. 527.

† Iliad, ix. ver. 498.

‡ Iliad, v. 340.

off the impression not only ruffled with the emotion of our passions, but obscured with the earthy mixture of our natures.

The other Gods have all their provinces assigned them: "Every thing has its peculiar deity," says \* Maximus Tyrius, "by which Homer would insinuate that the Godhead was present to all things." When they are considered farther, we find he has turned the virtues and endowments of our minds into *persons*, to make the springs of action become visible; and because they are given by the Gods, he represents them as Gods themselves descending from heaven. In the same strong light he shews our vices, when they occasion misfortunes, like extraordinary powers which inflict them upon us; and even our natural punishments are represented as punishers themselves. But when we come to see the manner they are introduced in, they are found feasting, fighting, wounded by men, and shedding a sort of blood †,

\* Maxim. Tyrius. Diss. 16.

† Longinus, in his ninth section, reflects on this subject with much dignity and good sense. "These indeed are exhibitions calculated to raise terror, but, unless conceived as allegorical, are prophane and indecorous. For Homer appears to me, in relating the wounds of the gods, their dissensions, their acts of revenge, their tears, their bonds, and all their varieties of suffering, to have made his men in the Iliad as like gods as possible, and his gods like men."—Nor will the reader be displeased with an observation of Cicero's on the subject: Tusc. disp. i. 26. Fingebat hæc Homerus, et humana ad deos transferebat: divina mallem ad nos. "These were the fictions of Homer, thus transferring the affections of man to the Gods: I should have been better pleased, had he given man the perfections of divinity."



in which his machines play a little too grossly; the fable, which was admitted to procure the pleasure of surprise, violently oppresses the moral, and it may be lost labour to search for it in every minute circumstance, if indeed it was intended to be there. The general strokes are however philosophical, the dress the poet's, which was used for convenience, and allowed to be ornamental\*. And something still may be offered in his defence, if he has both preserved the grand moral from being obscured, and adorned the parts of his works with such sentiments of the Gods as belonged to the age he lived in; which that he did, appears from his having then had that success for which allegory was contrived. "It is  
 " the madness of men," says † Maximus Tyrius, " to  
 " disesteem what is plain, and admire what is hidden;  
 " this the poets discovering, invented the fable for a  
 " remedy, when they treated of holy matters; which  
 " being more obscure than conversation, and more clear  
 " than the riddle, is a mean between knowledge and ig-  
 " norance; believed partly for being agreeable, and part-  
 " ly for being wonderful. Thus as Poets in name, and  
 " Philosophers in effect, they drew mankind gradually  
 " to a search after truth, when the name of philoso-  
 " pher would have been harsh and displeasing."

\* The sentence ran thus originally:—"The *main design* was  
 " however philosophical, the dress the poet's, which *is* used for  
 " necessity, and allowed to be ornamental." W.

† Maxim. Tyrius, Diss. 29.

When Homer proceeds to tell us our duty to these superior beings, we find prayer, sacrifice, lustration, and all the rites which were esteemed religious, constantly recommended, under fear of their displeasure. We find too a notion of the soul's subsisting after this life; but for want of revelation he knows not what to reckon the happiness of a future state, to any one who is not deified: which is plain from the speech of \*Achilles to Ulysses in the region of the dead; where he tells him, that he would rather serve the "poorest creature upon earth, than rule over all the departed." It was chiefly for this reason that Plato excluded him his commonwealth; he thought Homer spoke indecently of the Gods, and dreadfully of a future state †: but if he cannot be defended in every thing as a theologian, yet we may say in respect of his poetry, that he has enriched it from theology with true sentiments for profit; adorned it with allegories for pleasure; and by using some machines which have no farther significancy, or are so refined as to make it doubted if they have any, he has however produced that character in poetry which we call the *Marvellous*, and from which the *Agreeable* (according to Aristotle) is always inseparable.

If we take the state of Greece at  
 Politicks. his time in a political view, we find it

\* Odyss. xi. ver. 488.

† Then followed in the first edition:—"In which sentence he made no allowance for the times he writ in. But—" W.



a \*disunited country, made up of small states; and whatever was managed in war amounted to no more than intestine skirmishes, or piracies abroad, which were easily revenged on account of their disunion. Thus one people stole Europa, and another Iö; the Grecians took Hesione from Troy, and the Trojans took Helena from Greece in revenge. But this last having greater friends and alliances than any upon whom the rapes had hitherto fallen, the ruin of Troy was the consequence; and the force of the Asiatick coasts was so broken, that this accident put a stop † to the age of piracies. Then the intestine broils of Greece (which had been discontinued during the league) were renewed upon its dissolution. War and sedition moved people from place to place, during its want of inhabitants; Exiles from one country were received for Kings in another; and Leaders took tracts of ground to bestow them upon their followers. Commerce was neglected, living at home unsafe, and nothing of moment transacted by any but against their neighbours. Athens only, where the people were undisturbed, because it was a barren soil which nobody coveted, had begun to send colonies abroad, being overstocked with inhabitants.

Now a poem coming out at such a time, with a

\* See Thucydides, lib. 1.

† *A stop*: but in the first edition much better, *an end*: unless we have here a typographical error for, “put a stop to the rage of piracies.”

moral capable of healing these disorders by promoting *Union*, we may reasonably think it was designed for that end, to which it is so peculiarly adapted. If we imagine therefore that Homer was a politician in this affair, we may suppose him to have looked back into the ages past, to see if at any time these disorders had been less; and to have pitched upon that story, wherein they found a temporary cure; that by celebrating it with all possible honour he might instil a desire of the same sort of union into the hearts of his countrymen. This indeed was a work which could belong to none but a poet, when Governors had power only over small territories, and the numerous Governments were every way independent. It was then that all the charms of poetry were called forth to insinuate the important glory of an alliance; and the *Iliad* delivered as an Oracle from the Muses, with all the pomp of words and artificial influence. Union among themselves was recommended, peace at home, and glory abroad; and lest general precepts should be rendered useless by misapplications\*, he gives minute and particular lessons concerning it: how when their Kings quarrel their subjects suffer; when they act in conjunction, victory attends them; therefore, when they meet in council, plans are drawn, and provisions made for future action; and when in the field, the arts of war are described with the greatest

\* Originally;—“ by *mismanagements*, he *lets us into farther lessons concerning it.*” W.



exactness. These were lectures of general concern to mankind, proper for the poet to deliver, and Kings to attend to; such as made Porphyry write of the profit that princes might receive from Homer; and Stratocles, Hermias, and Frontinus\*, extract military discipline out of him. Thus, though Plato has banished him from one imaginary commonwealth, he has still been serviceable to many real kingdoms.

The morality of Greece could not be perfect while there was a natural weakness in its government; faults in politicks are occasioned by faults in Ethicks, and occasion them in their turn. The division into so many states was the rise of frequent quarrels, whereby men were bred up in a rough untractable disposition. Bodily strength met with the greatest honours, because it was daily necessary to the subsistence of little governments, and that headlong courage which throws itself forward to enterprise and plunder, was universally caressed, because it carried all things before it. It is no wonder in an age of such education and customs, that, as †Thucydides says, “Robbing was honoured, provided “it were done with gallantry, and that the ancient “poets made people question one another as they

Morality.

\* I do not recollect any thing of this kind in *Frontinus*: but in all these authorities our poet speaks only at second hand, and his testimony must always be received with proportionate mistrust. See, however, *Frontin.* ii. 3. 21. W.

† Thucyd. lib. 1.

“ sailed by, *if they were thieves ?*\* as a thing for which no one ought to be scorned or upbraided.” These were the sort of actions which the singers then recorded, and it was out of such an age that Homer was to take his subjects. For this reason (not a want of morality in him) we see a boasting temper and unmanaged roughness in the spirit of his Heroes, which ran out in pride, anger, or cruelty. It is not in him as in our modern Romances, where men are drawn in perfection, and we but read with a tender weakness what we can neither apply nor emulate. Homer writ for men, and therefore he writ of them; if the world had been better, he would have shewn it so; as the matter now stands, we see his people with the turn of his age, insatiably thirsting after glory and plunder; for which however he has found them a lawful cause, and taken care to retard their success by the intemperance of those very appetites.

In the prosecution of the story, every part of it has its lessons of morality: there is brotherly love in Agamemnon and Menelaüs, friendship in Achilles and Patroclus, and the love of his country in Hector. But since we have spoken of the Iliad as more particular for its politicks, we may consider the Odyssey as its moral is more directly framed for ethicks. It carries the Hero through a world of trials both of the dangerous and pleasurable nature. It shews him

\* See Odyssey, iii. ver. 84—90. of our poet's version.



first under most surprising weights of adversity, among shipwrecks and savages ; all these he is made to pass through, in the methods by which it becomes a man to conquer ; a patience in suffering, and a presence of mind in every accident. It shews him again in another view, tempted with the baits of idle or unlawful pleasures ; and then points out the methods of being safe from them. But if in general we consider the care our author has taken to fix his lessons of morality by the proverbs and precepts he delivers, we shall not wonder if Greece, which afterwards gave the appellation of *wise* to men who settled *single sentences* of truth, should give him the title of the *Father of Virtue*, for introducing such a number. To be brief, if we take the opinion of \*Horace, he has proposed him to us as a master of morality ; he lays down the common philosophical division of *good*, into *pleasant*, *profitable*, and *honest* ; and then asserts that Homer has more fully and clearly instructed us in each of them, than the most rigid philosophers.

Some indeed have thought, notwithstanding all

\* Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,  
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

Hor. Ep. 2. lib. 1.

Who tells us, what to seek, or what to shun,  
What in each state is fittest to be done,  
In manner, style, more graceful, and more plain,  
Than all the Casuists from Eliza's reign.

Nevile's Imitations.

W.

this, that Homer had only a design to please in his inventions; and that others have since extracted morals out of his stories (as indeed all stories are capable of being used so). But this is an opinion concerning Poetry, which the world has rather degenerated into than begun with. The tradition of Orpheus's civilizing mankind by moral \*poems, with others of the like nature, may shew there was a better use of the art both known and practised. There is also a remarkable passage of this kind in the third book of the *Odyssey*, that Agamemnon left one of the † Poets of those times in his Court when he sailed for Troy; and that his Queen was preserved virtuous by his songs, 'till Ægysthus was forced to expel him in order to debauch her. Here he has hinted what a true poetical spirit can do, when applied to the promotion of virtue; and from this one may judge he could not but design *that* himself, which he recommends as the duty and merit of his profession. Others since his time may have seduced the art to worse intentions; but they who are offended at the liberties of some poets, should not condemn all in the gross for trifling or corruption; especially when the evidence runs so strongly for any one to the contrary.

We may in general go on to observe, that at the time when Homer was born, Greece did not abound in learning. For wherever Politicks and Morality

\* In the first edition:—"by *Hymns on the Gods*."

W.

† *Odyss.* iii. ver. 267.



are weak, learning wants its peaceable air to thrive in\*. He has however introduced as much of their Learning, and even of what he learned from Ægypt, as the nature and compass of his work would admit. But that we may not mistake the Eulogies of those ancients who call him the *Father of Arts and Sciences*, and be surprised to find so little of them (as they are now in perfection) in his works; we should know that this character is not to be understood at large, as if he had included the full and regular systems of every thing: he is to be considered professedly only in quality of a poet; this was his business, to which as whatever he knew was to be subservient, so he has not failed to introduce those strokes of knowledge from the whole circle of arts and sciences, which the subject demanded, either for necessity or ornament†. And secondly, it should be observed, that many of those notions, which his great genius drew only from nature and the truth of things, have been imagined to proceed from his acquaintance with arts and sciences

\* These alterations from the first edition seem unprofitable. Thus originally:—"to thrive in, and that opportunity which is not known in the ages of unsettled life. He is himself the man from whom we have the first accounts of antiquity, either in its actions or learning; from whom we hear what Ægypt or Greece could inform him in, and whatever himself could discover by the strength of Nature or Industry. But however that we may not—." W.

† Instead of what follows to the next division of the subject, the first edition had only:—"This will appear on a fair view of him in each of these lights." W.

invented long after; to which that they were applicable, was no wonder, since both his notions and those sciences were equally founded in truth and nature.

History.

Before his time there were no historians in Greece; he treated historically of past transactions, according as he could be informed by tradition, song, or whatever method there was of preserving their memory. For this we have the consent of antiquity; they have generally more appealed to his authority, and more insisted on it, than on the testimony of any other writer, when they treat of the rites, customs, and manners of the first times: they have generally believed that the acts of Tydeus at Thebes, the second siege of that city, the settlement of Rhodes, the battle between the Curetes and the Ætolians, the succession of the Kings of Mycenæ by the sceptre of Agamemnon, the acts of the Greeks at Troy, and many other such accounts, are some of them wholly preserved by him; and the rest as faithfully related as by any historian. Nor perhaps was all of his invention which seems to be feigned, but rather frequently the obscure traces and remains of real persons and actions; which as \*Strabo observes, when history was transmitted by oral tradition, might be mixed with fable before it came into the hands of the poet. “ This happened “ (says he) to Herodotus, the first professed historian,

\* Strabo, l. 1.



“ who is as fabulous as Homer when he defers \* to  
 “ the common reports of countries; and it is not to  
 “ be imputed to either as a fault, but as a necessity of  
 “ the times.” Nay, the very passages which cause  
 us to tax them at this distance with being fabulous,  
 might be occasioned by their diligence, and a fear of  
 erring, if they too hastily rejected those reports which  
 had passed current in the nations they described.

Before his time there was no such  
 thing as *Geography* in Greece. For Geography.  
 this we have the suffrage of † Strabo, the best of  
 Geographers, who approves the opinion of Hipparchus  
 and other ancients, that Homer was the very author  
 of it; and upon this account begins his treatise of  
 the science itself, with an *encomium* on him. As  
 to the general part of it, we find he had a know-  
 ledge of the earth’s being surrounded with the ocean,  
 because he makes the sun and stars both to rise and  
 set in it: and that he knew the use of the stars is  
 plain from his making ‡ Ulysses sail by the observa-  
 tion of them. But the instance oftenest alleged upon  
 this point is the § shield of Achilles; where he places  
 the earth encompassed with the sea, and gives the  
 stars the names they are yet known by, as the  
 Hyades, Pleiades, the Bear, and Orion. By the

\* That is, in the *proper* signification of the word, when he  
*betakes himself*, or *pays regard*: of which sense Dr. Johnson knew  
 no example for his Dictionary. W.

† Strabo, *ibid. initio.*

‡ Odyss, l. v. ver. 272.

§ Iliad, xviii. 482, &c.

three first of these he represents the constellations of the northern region; and in the last he gives a single representative of the southern, to which (as it were for a counter-balance) he adds a title of greatness, *σθένος Ὠρίωνος*. Then he tells us that the Bear, or stars of the Arctick circle, never disappear; as an observation which agrees with no other. And if to this we add (what Eratosthenes thought he meant) that the five plates which were fastened on the shield, divided it by the lines where they met, into the five zones, it will appear an original design of globes and spheres. In the particular parts of *Geography* his knowledge is entirely incontestable. Strabo refers to him upon all occasions, allowing that he knew the extremes of the earth, some of which he names, and others he describes by signs, as the *Fortunate Islands*. The same \*author takes notice of his accounts concerning the several soils, plants, animals, and customs; as Ægypt's being fertile of medicinal herbs; Lybia's fruitfulness, where the ewes have horns, and yean thrice a year, &c. which are knowledges that make *Geography* more various and profitable. But what all have agreed to celebrate is his description of Greece, which had laws made for its preservation, and contests between governments decided by its authority; which †Strabo acknowledges to have no epithet, or ornamental expression for any place, that is not drawn from its nature, quality, or circum-

\* Strabo, l. 1.

† Strabo, l. 8.



stances ; and professes (after so long an interval) to deviate from it only where the country had undergone alterations, that cast the description into obscurity.

In his time *Rhetorick* was not known :  
 that art took its rise out of poetry, Rhetorick.  
 which was not till then established. “ The oratoria  
 “ elocution (says \* Strabo) is but an imitation of the.  
 “ poetical ; this appeared first and was approved :  
 “ they who imitated it took off the measures, but  
 “ still preserved all the other parts of poetry in their  
 “ writings : such were Cadmus the Milesian, Phe-  
 “ recydes, and Hecataeus. Then their followers  
 “ took something more from what was left, and at  
 “ last elocution descended into the prose which is now  
 “ among us.” But if *Rhetorick* is owing to poetry,  
 the obligation is still more due to Homer. He (as  
 † Quintilian tells us) gave both the pattern and rise to  
 all the parts of it. “ *Hic omnibus eloquentiæ parti-*  
 “ *bus exemplum et ortum dedit : hunc nemo in*  
 “ *magnis rebus sublimitate, in parvis proprietate,*  
 “ *superavit. Idem lætus et pressus, jucundus et*  
 “ *gravis, tum copiâ tum brevitate admirabilis, nec*  
 “ *poeticâ modo sed oratoriâ virtute eminentissimus.*”  
 From him, therefore, they who settled the art found it  
 proper to deduce the rules, which was easily done,  
 when they had divided their observations into the  
 kinds and the ornaments of elocution. For the kinds,

\* Strabo, l. 8.

† Quintil. l. 10. cap. 1.

the “ancients (says \*A. Gell.) settled them according  
 “to the three which they observe in his principal  
 “speakers; his Ulysses, who is magnificent and  
 “flowing; his Menelaus, who is short and close;  
 “and his Nestor, who is moderate and dispassioned,  
 “and has a kind of middle eloquence participating  
 “of both the former†.” And for the ornaments,  
 ‡Aristotle, the great master of the Rhetoricians, shows  
 what deference is due to Homer, when he orders the  
 orator to lay down his heads, and express both the  
 manners and affections of his work, with an imita-  
 tion of that diction, and those figures, which the  
*divine* Homer excelled in. This is the constant  
 language of those who succeeded him, and the opi-  
 nion so far prevailed as to make § Quintilian observe,  
 that they who have written concerning the art of  
 speaking, take from Homer most of the instances of  
 their similitudes, amplifications, digressions, and  
 arguments.

Natural Philo-  
 sophy.

As to || *Natural Philosophy*, the age  
 was not arrived when the Greeks culti-  
 vated and reduced into a system the principles of it,

\* Aulus Gell. l. 7. cap. 14.

† Compare our poet's observations on Iliad iii. ver. 271.

‡ Arist. *Topic.* § Quint. l. 10.

|| This first sentence was thus originally conducted:—“As to  
 “*Natural Philosophy*, the age was not arrived in which it flou-  
 “rished; however some of its notions may be traced in him. As  
 “when he says that the fountains and rivers come from the ocean,  
 “he holds a circulation of fluids on the earth. But as this—” I  
 cannot discern why this example was suppressed. W.



which they learned from Ægypt: yet we see many of these principles delivered up and down in his work. But, as this is a branch of learning which does not lie much in the way of a Poet who speaks of heroes and wars, the desire to prove his knowledge this way, has only run \*Politian and others into trifling inferences; as when they would have it that he understood the secrets of philosophy, because he mentions sun, rain, wind, and thunder. The most plausible way of making out his knowledge in this kind is, by supposing he couched it in allegories; and that he sometimes used the *names of the Gods* as his *Terms* for the *Elements*, as the *Chymists* now use them for *Metals*. But in applying this to him we must tread very carefully; not searching for allegory too industriously, where the passage may instruct by example; and endeavouring rather to find the fable an ornament to plain truths, than to make it a cover to curious and unknown problems.

As for *Medicine*, something of it must have been understood in that age; Physic. though in Greece it was so far from perfection, that what concerned *Diet* was invented long after by Hippocrates. The accidents of life make the search after remedies too indispensable a duty to be neglected at any time. Accordingly he †tells us, that the Ægyptians, who had many medicinal plants in their

\* Politian, *Præfatio in Hom.*

† Odyss. l. iv. ver. 231.

country, were all physicians ; and perhaps he might have learnt his own skill from his acquaintance with that nation. The state of war which Greece had lived in required a knowledge in the healing of wounds : and this might make him breed his princes, Achilles, Patroclus, Podalirius, and Machaon, to the science. What Homer thus attributes to others, he knew himself, and he has given us reason to believe, not slightly. For if we consider his insight into the structure of the human body, it is so nice, that he has been judged by some to have wounded his heroes with too much science : or if we observe his cure of wounds, which are the accidents proper to an epic poem, we find him directing the chirurgical operation, sometimes infusing \*lenitives, and at other times bitter powders when the effusion of blood required astringent qualities.

Statuary.

For *Statuary*, it appears by the accounts of Ægypt and the Palladium, that there was enough of it very early in the world, for those images which were required in the worship of their Gods ; but there are none mentioned as valuable in Greece so early, nor was the art established on its rules before Homer. He found it agreeable to the worship in use, and necessary for his machinery, that his Gods should be cloathed in bodies : wherefore he took care to give them such as

\* Iliad, iv. ver. 218. and Iliad, xi. *in fine*.



carried the utmost perfection of the human form ; and distinguished them from each other even in this superior beauty, with such marks as were agreeable to each of the Deities. “ This,” says \*Strabo, “ awakened the conceptions of the most eminent “ statuaries, while they strove to keep up the grandeur of that idea which Homer had impressed “ upon the imagination, as we read of Phidias concerning their statue of Jupiter.” And because they copied their Gods from him in their best performances, his descriptions became the *characters* which were afterwards pursued in all works of good taste. Hence came the common saying of the ancients, “ That either Homer was the only man “ who had seen the forms of the Gods, or the only one “ who had shown them to men ;” a passage which †Madame Dacier wrests to prove the truth of his theology, different from Strabo’s acceptation of it.

There are, besides what we have spoken of, other sciences pretended to be found in him. Thus Macrobius discovers that the *chain* with which ‡Jupiter says he could lift the world, is a *metaphysical notion*, that means a connexion of all things from the Supreme Being to the meanest part of the creation. Others, to prove him skilful in *judicial Astrology*, bring a quotation concerning the births of §Hector

\* Strab. l. 8.

† Dacier, *Preface to Homer*.

‡ Il. viii. ver. 19. *Vid. Macrob. de somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 14.*

§ Il. xviii. ver. 252.

and Polydamas on the same night ; who were nevertheless of different qualifications, one excelling in war, and the other in eloquence : others again will have him to be versed in *Magick*, from his stories concerning Circe. These and many of the like nature are interpretations strained or trifling, such as are not wanted for a proof of Homer's learning, and by which we contribute nothing to raise his character, while we sacrifice our judgment to him in the eyes of others.

It is sufficient to have gone thus far, in showing he was a father of learning, a soul capable of ranging over the whole creation with an intellectual view, shining alone in an age of obscurity, and shining beyond those who have had the advantage of more learned ages ; leaving behind him a work not only adorned with all the knowledge of his own time, but in which he has beforehand broken up the fountains of several sciences which were brought nearer to perfection by posterity : a work which shall always stand at the top of the sublime character, to be gazed at by readers with an admiration of its perfection, and by writers with a despair that it should ever be emulated with success.



A  
GENERAL VIEW  
OF THE  
EPICK POEM,  
AND OF THE  
ILIAD AND ODYSSEY.

Extracted from BOSSU\*.

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SECT. I.

THE Fables of Poets were originally employed in representing the Divine Nature, according to the notion then conceived of it. This sublime subject occasioned the first Poets to be called Divines†, and Poetry the language of the Gods. They divided the divine attributes into so many persons; because the infirmity of a human mind cannot sufficiently conceive, or explain, so much power and action in a simplicity so

\* Of the Nature of Epick Poetry.

† As, for example, in *Odyssey*, A. 336. *Ἰεῖον ἀοιδόν, the divine bard*. But the name rather arose, I presume, from their office, as teachers of *religion* and morality, commissioned and inspired by the *Gods*; as their representatives and messengers to mankind.

W.

great and indivisible as that of God. And perhaps they were also jealous of the advantages they reaped from such excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

They could not describe the operations of this almighty cause, without speaking at the same time of its effects : so that to Divinity they added Physiology, and treated of both without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expressions.

But man being the chief and most noble of all that God produced, and nothing being so proper, or more useful to Poets than this subject, they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of Morality after the same manner as they did that of Divinity and Philosophy : and from Morality thus treated, is formed that kind of Poem and Fable which we call Epick.

The Poets did the same in Morality that the Divines had done in Divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the Divine Nature (to which our understanding bears so small a proportion) did as it were force them upon dividing the single idea of the only one God into several persons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the rest.

And on the other hand, the nature of Moral Philosophy being such, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general ; the Epick poets were obliged to unite in one single idea, in one and the same person, and in an action which appeared singular, all that looked like it in different persons, and in various actions ; which might be thus contained as so many Species under their Genus.



The presence of the Deity, and the care such an august cause is to be supposed to take about any action, obliges the Poet to represent this action as great, important, and managed by \*kings and princes. It obliges him likewise to think and speak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a style that may in some sort keep up the character of the divine persons he introduces.† To this end serve the political and figurative expression, and the majesty of the Heroick Verse.

But all this, being divine and surprising, may quite ruin all probability : therefore the Poet should take a peculiar care as to that point, since his chief aim is to instruct, and without probability any action is less likely to persuade.

Lastly, since precepts ought to be ‡concise, to be the more easily conceived and less oppress the memory; and since nothing can be more effectual to this end than proposing one single idea, and collecting all things so well together, as to be present to our minds all at once; therefore the Poets have reduced all to one §single action, under one and the same design, and in a body whose members and parts should be homogeneous.

What we have observed of the nature of the Epick Poem, gives us a just idea of it, and we may define it thus :

\* Res gestæ regumque ducumque. Hor. *Art. Poet.*

† ——— Cui mens diviniior atque os

Magna sonaturum, des nominis hujus honorem. Horat.

‡ Quicquid præcipies esto brevis, ut citò dicta

Precipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles. Hor. *Poet.*

§ Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, et unum. Hor. *Poet.*

“ The Epick Poem is a discourse invented by art,  
 “ to form the manners, by such instructions as are  
 “ disguised under the allegories of some one important  
 “ action, which is related in verse, after a probable,  
 “ diverting, and surprising manner.”

## S E C T. II\*.

IN every design which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he proposes is the first thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus, since the end of the Epick Poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this first view the Poet ought to begin.

But there is a great difference between the philosophical and the poetical doctrine of manners. The schoolmen content themselves with treating of virtues and vices in general: the instructions they give are proper for all states, people, and for all ages. But the Poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the necessities of his own nation. With this design he makes choice of some piece of morality, the most proper and just he can imagine: and in order to press this home, he makes less use of the force of reasoning, than of the power of insinuation; accommodating himself to the particular customs and inclinations of those who are to be the subject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now see how Homer has acquitted himself in these respects.

He saw the Grecians, for whom he designed his

\* The Fable of the Iliad.



Poem, were divided into as many states as they had capital cities. Each was a body politick apart, and had its form of government independent from all the rest. And yet these distinct states were very often obliged to unite together in one body against their common enemies. These were two very different sorts of government, such as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one single Poem.

The Poet therefore has made two distinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but composed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular state, considered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumstances and the necessity of being united.

As for the first sort of government, in the union, or rather in the confederacy of many independent states; experience has always made it appear, “That nothing so much causes success as a due subordination, and a right understanding among the chief commanders. And on the other hand, the inevitable ruin of such confederacies proceeds from the heats, jealousies, and ambition of the different leaders, and the discontents of submitting to a single general.” All sorts of states, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the most useful and necessary instruction that could be given them, was to lay before their eyes the loss which both the people and the princes must of necessity suffer by the ambition, discord, and obstinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his

fable this great truth ; that a misunderstanding between princes is the ruin of their own states. “ I “ sing (says he) the anger of Achilles, so pernicious to “ the Grecians, and the cause of so many heroes’ “ deaths, occasioned by the discord and separation of “ Agamemnon and that prince.”

But that this truth may be completely and fully known, there is need of a second to support it. It is necessary in such a design, not only to represent the confederate states at first disagreeing among themselves, and from thence unfortunate ; but to show the same states afterwards reconciled and united, and of consequence victorious.

Let us now see how he has joined all these in one general action.

“ Several princes independent on one another were “ united against a common enemy. The person whom “ they had elected their general, offers an affront to “ the most valiant of all the confederates. This “ offended prince is so far provoked, as to relinquish “ the union, and obstinately refuse to fight for the “ common cause. This misunderstanding gives the “ enemy such an advantage, that the allies are very “ near quitting their design with dishonour. He “ himself who made the separation, is not exempt “ from sharing the misfortune which he brought upon “ his party. For having permitted his intimate friend “ to succour them in a great necessity, this friend is “ killed by the enemy’s general. Thus the contend- “ ing princes, being both made wiser at their own “ cost, are reconciled, and unite again : then this “ valiant prince not only obtains the victory in the “ publick cause, but revenges his private wrongs by



“killing with his own hands the author of the death  
“of his friend.”

This is the first platform of the Poem, and the fiction which reduces into one important and universal action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place it must be rendered probable by the circumstances of times, places, and persons: some persons must be found out, already known by history or otherwise, whom we may with probability make the actors and personages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the siege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and cholerick, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander, and so to the rest.

Besides, he was obliged to accommodate himself to the manners, customs, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the instruction of his Poem; and to gain their approbation by praising them: so that they might the better forgive him the representation of their own faults in some of his chief personages. He admirably discharges all these duties, by making these brave princes and those victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of those he had a mind to commend.

But not being content, in a work of such a length, to propose only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the rest with useless ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its necessary consequences. As for instance in the subject before us, it is not enough to know, that a good understanding ought always to be maintained among

confederates : it is likewise of equal importance, that if there happen any division, care must be taken to keep it secret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making use of it. And in the second place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance, one should never press the enemy too closely ; for this would discover the weakness which we ought to conceal from them.

The Episode of Patroclus most admirably furnishes us with these two instructions. For when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the Confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advantages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who should have been contented with this success, presses upon Hector too boldly, and by obliging him to fight, soon discovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his armour, but a hero of much inferior prowess. So that Hector kills him, and regains those advantages which the Trojans had lost, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

### S E C T. III.\*

THE Odyssey was not designed, like the Iliad, for the instruction of all the states of Greece joined in one body, but for each state in particular. As a state is composed of two parts ; the head which commands, and the members which obey ; there are instructions requisite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to submit to government.

\* The Fable of the Odyssey.



There are two virtues necessary to one in authority, prudence to order, and care to see his orders put in execution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all sorts of business, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and states. The care of the administration suffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own presence: and kings who are absent from their states, are in danger of losing them, and give occasion to great disorders and confusion.

These two points may be easily united in one and the same man. "A king forsakes his kingdom to visit the courts of several princes, where he learns the manners and customs of different nations. From hence there naturally arises a vast number of incidents, of dangers, and of adventures, very useful for a political institution. On the other side, this absence gives way to the disorders which happen in his own kingdom, and which end not till his return, whose presence only can re-establish all things." Thus the absence of a king has the same effects in this fable, as the division of the princes had in the former.

The subjects have scarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, To suffer themselves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reason they may imagine against the orders they receive\*.

\* The fabricator of this theory would have received with implicit reverence the sage directions of the *Mighty Mother* in the *Dunciad*, iv. 187.

May you, my Cam, and Isis, preach it long!

"The RIGHT DIVINE of kings to govern wrong." W.

It is easy to join this instruction with the other, by bestowing on this wise and industrious prince such subjects, as in his absence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonstrating the misfortunes which this disobedience draws upon them, the evil consequences which almost infallibly attend these particular notions, which are intirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

But as it was necessary that the princes in the *Iliad* should be cholerick and quarrelsome, so it is necessary in the fable of the *Odyssey* that the chief person should be sage and prudent. This raises a difficulty in the fiction; because this person ought to be absent for the two reasons aforementioned, which are essential to the fable, and which constitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot absent himself, without offending against another maxim of equal importance, viz. That a king should upon no account leave his country.

It is true, there are sometimes such necessities as sufficiently excuse the prudence of a politician in this point. But such a necessity is a thing important enough of itself to supply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which, in the first place, this necessity, and the departure of the hero, must be disjoined from the poem; and in the second place, the hero having been obliged to absent himself, for a reason antecedent to the action and placed distinct from the fable, he ought not so far to embrace this opportunity of instructing himself, as to absent himself voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his ab-



sence would be merely voluntary, and one might with reason lay to his charge all the disorders which might arrive.

Thus in the constitution of the fable he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country, nor his voluntary stay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded against his will. This is the first idea Homer gives us of it\*. His hero appears at first in a desolate island, sitting upon the side of the sea, which with tears in his eyes he looks upon as the obstacle that had so long opposed his return, and detained him from revisiting his own dear country.

And lastly, since this forced delay might more naturally and usually happen to such as make voyages by sea, Homer has judiciously made choice of a prince whose kingdom was in an island.

Let us see then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a person in years, because years are requisite to instruct a man in prudence and policy.

“ A prince had been obliged to forsake his native  
 “ country, and to head an army of his subjects in a  
 “ foreign expedition. Having gloriously performed  
 “ this enterprise, he was marching home again, and  
 “ conducting his subjects to his own state. But spite  
 “ of all the attempts, with which the eagerness to  
 “ return had inspired him, he was stopt by the way  
 “ by tempests for several years, and cast upon several  
 “ countries differing from each other in manners and

\* *Odyssey* v.

“ government. In these dangers his companions, not  
“ always following his orders, perished through their  
“ own fault. The grandees of his country strangely  
“ abuse his absence, and raise no small disorders at  
“ home. They consume his estate, conspire to de-  
“ stroy his son, would constrain his queen to accept  
“ of one of them for her husband; and indulge them-  
“ selves in all violence, so much the more, because  
“ they were persuaded he would never return. But  
“ at last he returns, and discovering himself only to  
“ his son and some others, who had continued firm  
“ to him, he is an eye-witness of the insolence of his  
“ enemies, punishes them according to their deserts,  
“ and restores to his island that tranquillity and repose  
“ to which they had been strangers during his ab-  
“ sence.”

As the truth, which serves for foundation to this fiction, is, that the absence of a person from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cause of great disorders; so the principal point of the action, and the most essential one, is the absence of the hero. This fills almost all the poem: for not only this real absence lasted several years, but even when the hero returned, he does not discover himself; and this prudent disguise, from whence he reaped so much advantage, has the same effect upon the authors of the disorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real absence had before, so that he is absent as to them, 'till the very moment of their punishment.

After the Poet had thus composed his fable, and joined the fiction to the truth, he then makes choice of Ulysses the king of the isle of Ithaca, to main-



tain the character of his chief personage, and bestowed the rest upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleases.

I shall not here insist upon the many excellent advices, which are so many parts and natural consequences of the fundamental truth; and which the Poet very dextrously lays down in those fictions which are the episodes and members of the entire action. Such for instance are these advices: Not to intrude one's self into the mysteries of government, which the prince keeps secret: this is represented to us by the winds shut up in a bull-hide, which the miserable companions of Ulysses would needs be so foolish as to pry into. Not to suffer one's self to be led away by the seeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Siren's song invited. Not to suffer one's self to be sensualized by pleasures, like those who were changed into brutes by Circe: and a great many other points of morality necessary for all sorts of people.

This poem is more useful to the people than the *Iliad*, where the subjects suffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes, than through their own miscarriages. But in the *Odyssey*, it is not the fault of Ulysses that is the ruin of his subjects. This wise prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the Poet in the *Iliad* says, "He sings the anger of Achilles, "which had caused the death of so many Grecians;" and on the contrary, in the *Odyssey* he tells his readers, "That the subjects perished through their "own fault."

## S E C T. IV\*.

ARISTOTLE bestows great encomiums upon Homer for the simplicity of his design †, because he has included in one single part all that happened at the siege of Troy. And to this he opposes the ignorance of some Poets who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was sufficiently preserved by the unity of the hero; and who composed their Theseïds, Heracleïds, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem every thing that happened to one personage.

He finds fault with those Poets who were for reducing the unity of the fable into the unity of the hero, because one man may have performed several adventures, which it is impossible to reduce under any one general and simple head. This reducing of all things to unity and simplicity is what Horace likewise makes his first rule :

“ Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, et unum.

According to these rules, it will be allowable to make use of several fables ; (or to speak more correctly) of several incidents which may be divided into several fables ; provided they are so ordered, that the unity of the fable be not spoiled. This liberty is still greater in the Epick Poem, because it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I will explain myself more distinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four distinct fables out of these four following instructions.

\* Of the Unity of the Fable.

† In his Poetics, cap. ix. W.



1. *Division between those of the same party exposes them entirely to their enemies.*

2. *Conceal your weakness, and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of those imperfections, of which they are ignorant.*

3. *When your strength is only feigned, and founded only in the opinion of others, never venture so far as if your strength was real.*

4. *The more you agree together, the less hurt can your enemies do you.*

It is plain, I say, that each of these particular maxims might serve for the ground-work of a fiction, and one might make four distinct fables out of them. May not one then put all these into one single epopea? Not unless one single fable can be made out of all. The Poet indeed may have so much skill as to unite all into one body, as members and parts, each of which taken asunder would be imperfect; and if he joins them so, this conjunction shall be no hindrance at all to the unity and the regular simplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with such success in the composition of the Iliad.

1. *The division between Achilles and his allies tended to the ruin of their designs.* 2. *Patroclus comes to their relief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats.* 3. *But this young man, pushing too far the advantage which his disguise gave him, ventures to engage with Hector himself; but not being master of Achilles's strength (whom he only represented in outward appearance) he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which in that disguise he came to free them.* 4. *Achilles, provoked at the death of his*

*friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector.* These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the uncomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and fable, which alone when taken thus complexly, can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral, are easily reduced into these two parts, which in my opinion cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these\*, That a right understanding is the preservation, and discord the destruction of states.

Though then the Poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed; yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification; altogether necessary and regular, namely its perfection and finishing stroke.

## S E C T. V †.

THE action of a poem is the subject which the Poet undertakes, proposes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the instructions which are the end of the epick poem are not the matter of it. Those the Poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obscurity. They only give notice at the *exordium*, that they sing some *action*. *The revenge of Achilles, the return of Ulysses, &c.*

\* *Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt: discordiâ magnæ dilabuntur.*  
*Sallust. de bello Jug.*

† Of the Action of the Epick Poem.



Since then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident that whatever incidents are essential to the fable, or constitute a part of it, are necessary also to the action, and are parts of the epick matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for instance, are the contention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the slaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the re-union of the Greek princes; and lastly, the re-settlement and victory which was the consequence of that re-union.

There are four qualifications in the epick action: the first is its *unity*, the second its *integrity*, the third its *importance*, the fourth its *duration*.

The unity of the epick action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not consist either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things I suppose are necessary to it. The first is, to make use of no episode but what arises from the very platform and foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The second is, exactly to unite these episodes and these members with one another. And the third is, never to finish any episode so as it may seem to be an entire action; but to let each episode still appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itself not complete.

\* Aristotle not only says that the epick action should be one, but adds, that it should be entire, perfect, and complete, and for this purpose ought to have a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*. These three parts of a whole are too generally and universally denoted

\* Of the Beginning, Middle, and End of the Action.

by the words, beginning, middle, and end; we may interpret them more precisely, and say, That the causes and designs of an action are the beginning; that the effects of these causes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of these designs, are the middle; and that the unravelling and resolution of these difficulties are the end.

\* Homer's design in the *Iliad* is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a passionate temper. The middle is the effects of his passion, and all the illustrious deaths it is the cause of. The end of this same action is the return of Achilles to his calmness of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon their general provoked Apollo against them, whom he was willing to appease afterwards at the cost and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning: it supposes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himself, and that is an exact middle; it supposes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the satisfaction of Achilles; for the revenge had not been complete, unless Achilles had been satisfied. By this means the Poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the mischief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by insulting over his murderer; he makes him, I say, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of King

\* The Action of the *Iliad*.



Priam. We see him as calm at the end of the poem, during the funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilst the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is just, since the calmness of temper Achilles re-enjoyed is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded : and after this nobody expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle, and end of the action he made choice of for the subject of his Iliad.

\* His design in the Odyssey was to describe the return of Ulysses from the siege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva against Neptune, who opposed the return of this hero, and against Calypso who detained him in an island from Ithaca. Is this a beginning ? No ; doubtless the reader would know why Neptune is displeased with Ulysses, and how this prince came to be with Calypso ? He would know how he came from Troy thither ? The Poet answers his demands out of the mouth of Ulysses himself, who relates these things, and begins the action, by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It signifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulysses, when upon his leaving Troy he bends his course for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the misfortunes he endured, and all the disorders of his own government. The end is the re-instating of the hero in the peaceable possession of his kingdom, where he was acknow-

\* The Action of the Odyssey.

ledged by his son, his wife, his father, and several others. The Poet was sensible he should have ended ill, had he gone no farther than the death of these princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulysses, because the reader might have looked for some revenge which the subjects of these princes might have taken on him who had killed their sovereigns : but this danger over, and the people vanquished and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

But the order of the *Odyssey* differs from that of the *Iliad*, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

\*The Causes of the Action are also what the Poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three sorts of causes, the humours, the interests, and the designs of men ; and these different causes of an action are likewise often the causes of one another ; every man taking up those interests in which his humour engages him, and forming those designs to which his humour and interest incline him. Of all these the Poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conspicuous in his principal personages.

Homer has ingeniously begun his *Odyssey* with the transactions at Ithaca, during the absence of Ulysses. If he had begun with the travels of his Hero, he would scarce have spoken of any one else, and a man might have read a great deal of the Poem, without conceiving the least idea of *Telemachus*, *Penelope*, or her suitors, who had so great a share in

\* Of the Causes and Beginning of the Action.



the action ; but in the beginning he has pitched upon, besides these personages whom he discovers, he represents Ulysses in his full length, and from the very first opening one sees the interest which the Gods take in the action.

The skill and care of the same Poet may be seen likewise in introducing his personages in the first book of his Iliad, where he discovers the humours, the interests, and the designs of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulysses, and several others, and even of the Deities. And in his second he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies, which is full evidence that all we have here said is very necessary.

\* As these Causes are the Beginning of the Action, the opposite designs against that of the Hero are the Middle of it, and form that Difficulty or Intrigue, which makes up the greatest part of the Poem ; the Solution or Unravelling commences when the reader begins to see that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his Poems into two parts, and has put a particular intrigue, and the solution of it, into each part.

The first part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himself upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight which happened in the absence of Achilles : and it consists on one side in the resistance of Agamemnon and the Grecians : and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not suffer him to be reconciled. The loss of the Grecians, and the despair of

\* Of the Middle or Intrigue of the Action,

Agamemnon, prepare for a solution by the satisfaction which the incensed hero received from it. The death of Patroclus, joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of itself had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unravelling of the first part.

This death is likewise the beginning of the second part: since it puts Achilles upon the design of revenging himself on Hector. But the design of Hector is opposite to that of Achilles: this Trojan is valiant, and resolved to stand on his own defence. This valour and resolution of Hector, are on his part the cause of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles used to meet with Hector and be the death of him, and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach, and defend himself, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the last day. The unravelling begins at the death of Hector; and besides that, it contains the insulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of king Priam. The regrets of this king and the other Trojans, in the sorrowful obsequies they paid to Hector's body, end the unravelling; they justify the satisfaction of Achilles, and demonstrate his tranquillity.

The first part of the Odyssey is the return of Ulysses into Ithaca. Neptune opposes it by raising tempests, and this makes the intrigue. The unravelling is the arrival of Ulysses upon his own island, where Neptune could offer him no farther injury. The second part is the reinstating this hero in his own government. The princes that are his riva's oppose him, and this is a fresh intrigue: the solution



of it begins at their deaths, and is completed as soon as the Ithacans were appeased.

These two parts in the *Odyssey* have not one common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the *Iliad*; and it is so far the matter of this *Epopœa*, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the desire Achilles had to revenge himself and the desire Ulysses had to return to his own country be never so near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the same notion: for that desire of Ulysses is not a passion that begins and ends in the Poem with the action: it is a natural habit: nor does the Poet propose it for his subject as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already observed what is meant by the Intrigue, and the Unravelling thereof; let us now say something of the manner of forming both. These two should arise naturally out of the very essence and subject of the Poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is so exact and natural, that it seems as if their action had presented them with whatever they inserted, without putting themselves to the trouble of a farther inquiry.

What is more usual and natural to warriors than anger, heat, passion, and impatience of bearing the least affront or disrespect? This is what forms the intrigue of the *Iliad*; and every thing we read there is nothing else but the effect of this humour and these passions.

What more natural and usual obstacle to those who take voyages, than the sea, the winds, and the storms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the first

part of the *Odyssey* : and for the second, he makes use of almost the infallible effect of the long absence of a master, whose return is quite despaired of, viz. the insolence of his servants and neighbours, the danger of his son and wife, and the sequestration of his estate. Besides, an absence of almost twenty years, and the insupportable fatigue, joined to the age Ulysses then was, might induce him to believe that he should not be owned by those who thought him dead, and whose interest it was to have him really so. Therefore if he had presently declared who he was, and had called himself Ulysses, they would have easily destroyed him as an impostor, before he had an opportunity to make himself known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more necessary than this ingenious disguise, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his absence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without hazarding any thing, of taking the best measures he could, against those persons who could not so much as mistrust any harm from him. This way was afforded him, by the very nature of his action, to execute his designs, and overcome the obstacles it cast before him. And it is this contest between the prudence and the dissimulation of a single man on one hand, and the ungovernable insolence of so many rivals on the other, which constitutes the intrigue of the second part of the *Odyssey*.

\*If the Plot or Intrigue must be natural, and such as springs from the very subject, as has been already



urged, then the Winding-up of the plot, by a more sure claim, must have this qualification, and be a probable consequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the rest, so should the Poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the Poem, and the last impression that is to be stamped upon them.

We shall find this in the *Odyssey*. Ulysses by a tempest is cast upon the island of the Phæacians, to whom he discovers himself, and desires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far distant. One cannot see any reason why the king of this island should refuse such a reasonable request, to a hero whom he seemed to have in great esteem. The Phæacians indeed had heard him tell the story of his adventures; and in this fabulous recital consisted all the advantage that he could derive from his presence; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedness under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, were such as these islanders were not used to. All their talent lay in singing and dancing, and whatsoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we see how dextrously Homer prepares the incidents he makes use of. These people could do no less, for the account with which Ulysses had so much entertained them, than afford him a ship and a safe convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long absence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he discovered himself too soon, forced him to a disguise: lastly, this disguise gave him an oppor-

tunity of surprising those young suitors, who for several years together had been accustomed to nothing but to sleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from these examples that Aristotle drew this rule, that “ Whatever concludes the Poem should “ so spring from the very constitution of the Fable, “ as if it were a necessary, or at least a probable “ consequence\*.”

## S E C T. VI †.

THE Time of the Epick Action is not fixed, like that of the Dramatick Poem: it is much longer; for an uninterrupted duration is much more necessary in an action which one sees and is present at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Besides Tragedy is full of passion, and consequently of such a violence as cannot admit of so long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of Anger and Violence, the Poet allows it but a short time, about forty Days. The design of the Odyssey required another conduct; the character of the Hero is Prudence and Long-suffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight Years.

‡ The Passions of Tragedy are different from those of the Epick Poem. In the former, Terror and Pity have the chief place; the Passion that seems most peculiar to Epick Poetry, is admiration.

Besides this admiration, which in general distinguishes the Epick Poem from the Dramatick, each

\* In his Poeticks, cap. xi.

† The Time of the Action.

‡ The Passions of the Epick Poem.



Epick Poem has likewise some peculiar Passion, which distinguishes it in particular from other Epick Poems, and constitutes a kind of singular and individual difference between these Poems of the same species. These singular Passions correspond to the Character of the Hero. Anger and Terror reign throughout the Iliad, because Achilles is angry, and the most terrible of all men. The Æneid has all the soft and tender Passions, because that is the character of Æneas. The prudence, wisdom, and constancy of Ulysses do not allow him either of these extremes, therefore the Poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the Odyssey. He confines himself to admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the Iliad: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines, in the Odyssey, into the body of the action, than are to be seen in the actions of the other two Poems.

\*The manners of the Epick Poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not necessary they be always morally so. They are poetically good, when one may discover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations, of every one who speaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when persons are made to speak or act out of character, or inconsistently or unequally. The manners of Æneas and of Mezentius are equally good, considered poetically, because they equally demonstrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

†It is requisite to make the same distinction between a hero in morality, and a hero in poetry, as

\* The Manners.

† Character of the Hero.

between moral and poetical goodness. Achilles had as much right to the latter as Æneas. Aristotle says that the Hero of a Poem should be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the rest of mankind by his virtues, nor sunk beneath them by his vices: that he may be the proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate, and what to decline.

The other qualifications of the Manners are, that they be suitable to the causes which either raise or discover them in the persons; that they have an exact Resemblance to what History, or Fable, have delivered of those persons, to whom they are ascribed; and that there be an Equality in them, so that no man is made to act, or speak, out of his character.

\*But this equality is not sufficient for the Unity of the Character; it is further necessary, that the same spirit appear in all sort of encounters. Thus Æneas acting with great Piety and Mildness in the first part of the Æneid, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illustrious in heroic valour, in the wars of the second part; but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a soft disposition: would, doubtless, be far from offending against the Equality of the Manners; but yet there would be no Simplicity or Unity in the Character. So that, besides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occasions, there must be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the rest; and without this, we may affirm it is no character.

One may indeed make a Hero as valiant as Achilles,

\* Unity of the Character.



as pious as Æneas, and as prudent as Ulysses. But it is a mere chimæra to imagine a Hero that has the valour of Achilles, the piety of Æneas, and the prudence of Ulysses, at one and the same time. This vision might happen to an author, who would suit the character of a Hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the essence of the Fable, or the unity of the character in the same person upon all sorts of occasions: this Hero would be the mildest, best-natured Prince in the world, and also the most cholerick, hard-hearted, and implacable creature imaginable; he would be extremely tender like Æneas, extremely violent like Achilles, and yet have the indifference of Ulysses, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the Poet to call this person by the same name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in several poems, whose authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a Hero is that of an accomplished man. They would be all alike; all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent; and, lastly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any Poet could invent. All this would be independent of the action and the subject of the Poem; and, upon seeing each Hero separated from the rest of the work, we should not easily guess, to what Action, and to what Poem, the Hero belonged. So that we should see that none of those would have a Character; since the Character is that which makes a person discernible, and which distinguishes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles, is his anger,

in Ulysses the art of dissimulation, in Æneas meekness. Each of these may be styled, by way of eminence, the Character in these Heroes.

But these characters cannot be alone. It is absolutely necessary that some other should give them a lustre, and embellish them as far as they are capable: either by hiding the defects that are in each, by some noble and shining qualities; as the Poet has done the anger of Achilles, by shading it with extraordinary valour: or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and solid virtue, as is to be observed in the two others. The dissimulation of Ulysses is a part of his prudence; and the meekness of Æneas is wholly employed in submitting his will to the Gods. For the making up this union, our Poets have joined together such qualities as are by nature the most compatible; Valour with Anger, Meekness with Piety, and Prudence with Dissimulation. This last union was necessary for the Goodness of Ulysses; for without that, his dissimulation might have degenerated into wickedness and double-dealing.

## S E C T. VII\*.

WE come now to the Machines of the epick poem. The chief passion which it aims to excite being admiration, nothing is so conducive to that as the marvellous; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing so greatly elevated as by the care and interposition of heaven.

The machines are of three sorts. Some are theo-

\* Of the Machinery.



logical, and were invented to explain the nature of the Gods. Others are physical, and represent the things of nature. The last are moral, and are the images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the ancients have given to their Deities the manners, passions, and vices of men. Their poems are wholly allegorical; and in this view it is easier to defend Homer than to blame him. We cannot accuse him for making mention of many Gods, for his bestowing passions upon them, or even introducing them fighting against men. The Scripture uses the like figures and expressions.

If it be allowable to speak thus of the Gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philosophy, where, if a poet describes the Deities, he must give them such manners, speeches, and actions, as are conformable to the nature of the things they represent under those Divinities. The case is the same in the morals of the Deities: Minerva is wise because she represents prudence; Venus is both good or bad, because the passion of love is capable of these contrary qualities.

Since among the Gods of a poem some are good, some bad, and some indifferently either; and since of our passions we make so many allegorical Deities; we may attribute to the Gods all that is done in the poem, whether good or evil. But these Deities do not act constantly in one and the same manner.

Sometimes they act invisibly, and by mere Inspiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous: being no more than what we say every day, "That some God has assisted us," or "some demon has instigated us."

At other times they appear visibly, and manifest themselves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and preternatural.

The third way has something of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly so accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, &c.

All these ways must be probable; for however necessary the marvellous is to the epick action, as nothing is so conducive to admiration, yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing that we think impossible. Though the probability of these machines be of a very large extent, (since it is founded upon divine power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous instances of allowable and probable machines in the epick poem, where the Gods are no less actors than the men. But the less credible sort, such as metamorphoses, &c. are far more rare.

This suggests a reflection on the method of rendering those machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly so. Those, which require only divine probability, should be so disengaged from the action, that one might subtract them from it, without destroying the action. But those, which are essential and necessary, should be grounded upon human probability, and not on the sole power of God. Thus the episodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, &c. are necessary to the action of the Odyssey, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human probability, by the simplicity and ignorance of the Phæacians, before whom he causes those recitals to be made.

The next question is, Where, and on what occasions machines may be used? It is certain Homer



and Virgil make use of them every where, and scarce suffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius makes this a precept: *Per ambages deorumque ministeria*, &c. The Gods are mentioned in the very proposition of their works, the invocation is addrest to them, and the whole narration is full of them. The Gods are the causes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the solution. The precept of Aristotle and Horace, that the unravelling of the plot should not proceed from a miracle, or the appearance of a God, has place only in the dramatick poetry, not in the epick. For it is plain, that both in the solution of the Iliad and Odyssey, the Gods are concerned: in the former, the Deities meet to appease the anger of Achilles: Iris and Mercury are sent to that purpose, and Minerva eminently assists Achilles in the decisive combat with Hector. In the Odyssey, the same Goddess fights close by Ulysses against the Suitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacensians, which completes the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the Poet out of any difficulty which embarrasses him: but that the presence of a Divinity, and some action surprising and extraordinary, are inserted into almost all the parts of his work, in order to render it more majestick and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be so made, that the machines might be retrenched, without taking any thing from the action: at the same time that it gives the readers a lesson of piety and virtue: and teaches them that the most brave and the most wise can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the assistance of heaven. Thus the

machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral\*.

\* If the reader shall receive any help from this long dissertation, either with respect to the general construction of the Iliad and Odyssey, or the beauty and propriety of detached parts, he is much more fortunate than the Editor: who prefers a single particle of taste to all this mass of ingenious and baseless speculation, which gratuitously determines, that every thing done by Homer is unexceptionably just; that his plan is incapable of amendment, and his execution, Rectitude itself. True Taste and such Theories differ in the Editor's estimation, as the shields of Diomede and Glaucus; Iliad vi. 292.

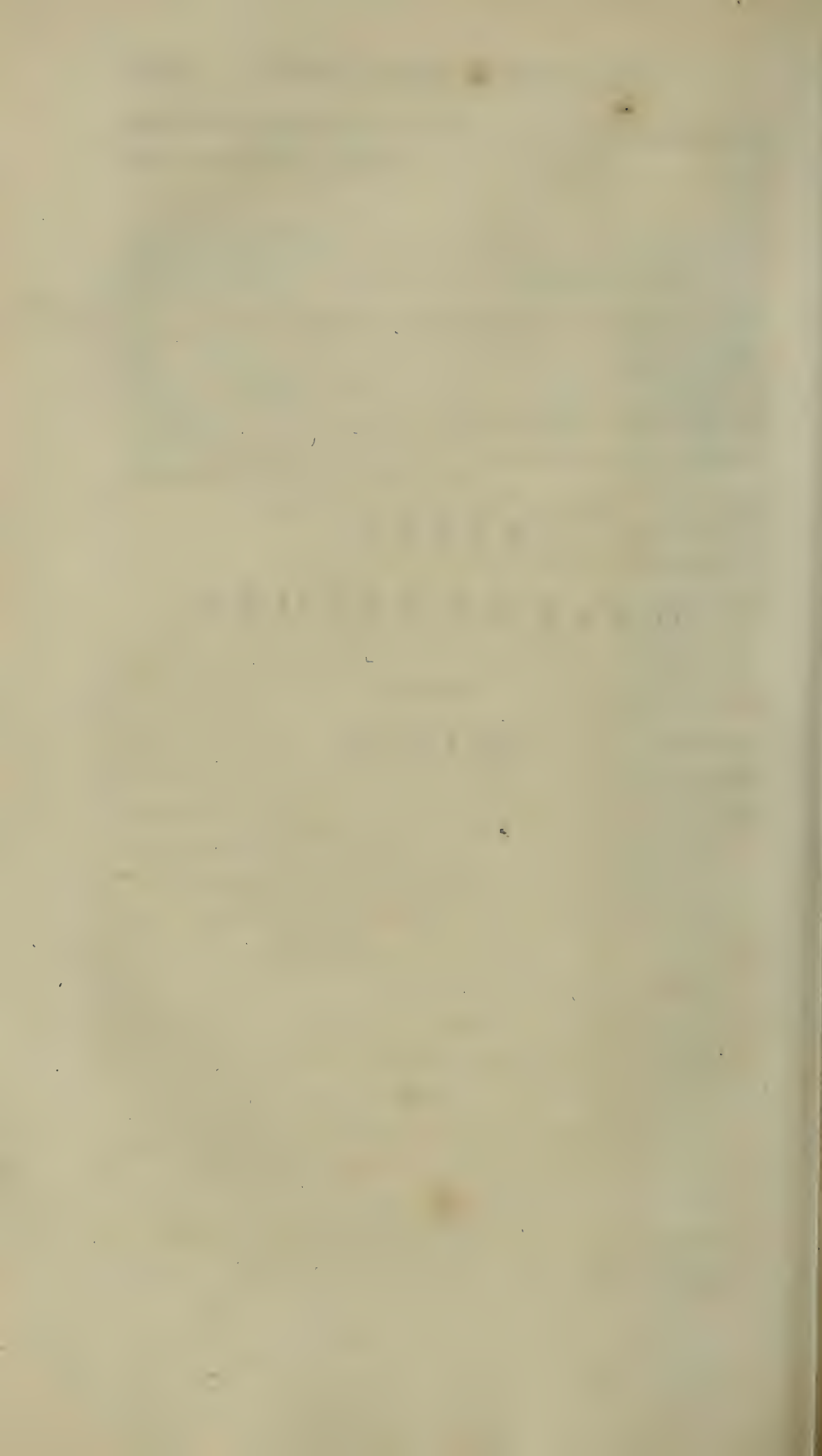
Χρυσέα χαλκείων, ηκατομβοί' εννεαβοίων.

W.



GENERAL  
OBSERVATIONS.

BY THE  
EDITOR.





# GENERAL OBSERVATIONS,

RELATIVE TO

## HOMER AND HIS TRANSLATOR.

---

Each wight, who reads not, and but scans and spells,  
Each word-catcher, that lives on syllables,  
Even such small critics some regard may claim,  
Preserv'd in Milton's or in Shakspeare's name.

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WHAT miscellaneous observations, of the least probable importance, have presented themselves to notice in the course of my former studies, respecting Homer and his writings, and what suggestions, relative to our countryman and his translation, which have unavoidably arisen during the discharge of my office, as an editor of the work before us, would be exhibited more agreeably, I presumed, in this detached form, than as enormous notes to the preliminary dissertation of our translator, at the bottom of the page.

The *time*, at which HOMER lived, seems fixed within a determinate æra by that peculiarity of the *Æolic* dialect, which uniformly employed the *digamma*\* as a distinct character before certain words and betwixt certain syllables: and of which peculiarity no regular traces

\* So called, because represented by a character resembling the modern F, not unlike a double r, if we suppose one placed on the shoulders of another.

are discoverable but in him and *Hesiod*: an æra, more or less contemporary with that age, in which various parts of Italy were colonized by different emigrations of Æolian Greeks, who communicated this criterion of their dialect to the Roman language. *Foster*, in his essay on Accent and Quantity\*, has illustrated this point from numerous examples of Latin terms, constructed by the application of this letter; to which I shall take this opportunity of adding a few more. Οἶκος, *focus*: παῖω, *pavio*: εἰλω, *volo*: σεργοί, *Hesychius*, for σερφοί, *cervi*: παών, *pavo*: βοός, *bovis*: αἰών, *cænum*: σκαῖος, *scævus*: αἰω, *audio*: ἰαχω, *voco*: βολω, *volo*: αορνον, *Avernum*: *Virgil*, *Æn.* vi. 242. from *Lucretius*, vi. 740. νεός, *novus*: *Heneti*. *Veneti*, *Liv.* i. 1, 2. see more with respect to this form in *Festus*, voce *fedum*, and the commentators there: *annuvit bovantes*, *Enn. Ann.* ii. & xiv. ἔσσαι, *vestire*, *Hom. Od.* Ω. 249. σπαρῶ, *spargo*: διός, *divus*: δια, *diva*: ἐμεω, *vomo*: ἰτελος, *vitulus*: ἐντερον, *venter*†. This correspondence, therefore, in the language of those Ætolians, who settled in Italy, and imparted their peculiarity to the primary fabric of the aboriginal tongue in use with those districts, where they settled, indicates those migrations to be nearly synchronous with *Homer*; in whose works this property is, I presume, invariably preserved. For those passages of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, that form exceptions to this practice, are probably corrupted, from time and the carelessness of transcribers, or are interpolations by subsequent writers and grammarians; who made these insertions to preserve continuity and coherence in a poem, originally composed by *Homer* in detached portions,

\* Pages 105 and 106, second edition: see also the quotations from *Priscian*, p. 97, and other parts of that entertaining and instructive work; with *Dion. Hal. ant. Rom.* i. fin.

† See too *Sanctii Minerv.* iv. 16, 13. for other instances: who has anticipated some of mine; as others, perhaps, besides him have done, but without my consciousness of such prevention.



and sung in this state of separation by Homer himself, and the bards of succeeding times\*.

Again: As HESIOD only, of all the Grecian poets beside Homer, maintains with undeviating accuracy this peculiarity of the *digamma* through all his extant works, we are led to conclude from this coincidence, what indeed very well agrees with the best testimonies of ancient writers, no great disparity between the ages of Hesiod and of Homer. Now Hesiod in his *Works and Days*, ver. 172, speaks of himself, it should seem, as living in the age succeeding the Trojan war: and this circumstance also will carry the date of these poets to a very high antiquity.

Lastly, Some particularities in the works of Homer, both historical, moral, and philological, constitute a collection of *internal* evidence, that pleads loudly for a very early period of time to his existence. I must forewarn the reader, to prevent a charge of unacknowledged plagiarism, which I abhor, that some of my specifications on these topics will not be altogether new, but will come accompanied, perhaps, by such additional enforcement and illustration, as will render them not unworthy the acceptance of the public.

1. It has been remarked, that the river *Nile* is called the river *Ægyptus*, wherever it is mentioned in the *Odyssey*; for there alone it is mentioned; and by no other name. Plutarch informs us, in his treatise on Rivers, that the first appellation of this river was *Melas*, corresponding to the *Sehor* of the prophet †. This assertion, however, may well be disputed; and it seems more probable to me, as well from the usage of more ancient authors, as from connecting circumstances, that the earliest name of the Nile was the *second* in Plutarch's list, namely, *Ægyptus*; naturally so denominated from the country itself: that is, "the river of *Ægypt*:" for such is the name in use with undoubtedly the

\* See Achilles Tatius, ii. init. et p. 296. ed. Boden.

† Jerem. ii. 18. See my *Silva Critica*, sect. ii.

earliest historians in existence, who have mentioned this river; I mean *Moses* and *Joshua* \*. Now the plain inference from this particular of historic evidence is, that Homer lived in an age, when no other name of the river in question was current among nations; and, perhaps, when no other name was known: and from this consideration we are also led to fix the æra of Homer at some years previous to that of Hesiod, who mentions the *Nile* expressly among other rivers †.

Strabo‡ has observed, in attestation of the high antiquity of Homer, that the poet was not acquainted with the empire either of the Syrians or Medes: “otherwise,” says the philosophical Geographer, ‘with great appearance of reason, “when he mentions Ægyptian Thebes, it’s opulence, and the riches of Phœnicia, he would not have left “unnoticed the wealth of Babylon, Nineveh, and Ecbatana.” In another place § the same writer has remarked, “that Homer no where speaks of Tyre.”—Now the probable conclusions from these facts are inevitable, and amount to very powerful presumptions in favour of the present argument.

“With the uses of *elephant*, or ivory (I quote the words “of Pausanias||) in artificial workmanship, many, it is plain, “were acquainted from remote antiquity; but the beasts “themselves had been seen by none, if you except the “Indians, and Libyans, and the borderers on the countries “that produced these animals, before the Macedonian expedition into Asia. Homer is a proof of this: who speaks “of the couches and houses of kings and rich men, as “adorned with *elephant*, but has no memorial of the beast;

\* Gen. xv. 18. Jos. xv. 47. which furnishes a symptom of pleasing conformity to the pretended antiquity of those books.

† In his Theogony, ver. 388.

The *Nile*, *Alpheus*, and the gulfy Po.

Νῆλόν τ', Ἀλφειὸν τε, καὶ Ἠριδανὸν βαθυδίνην:

‡ Towards the end of book xv.

§ Book xvi.

|| In Atticis, sect. xii.



“ which, if he had ever seen it, or heard of it, he would  
 “ have been much more forward to commemorate, than the  
 “ battle of cranes and pigmies \*.”

The scholiast on Sophocles † speaks of the introduction of the *Tuscan Trumpet* into Greece as contemporary with the war of the Heraclidæ: and, in addition to this piece of history, the scholiast on Euripides ‡ informs us, that Homer was acquainted with the *trumpet* §, but never ascribes the use of it to his heroes in the *Iliad*. Whence this inference seems not unreasonable, that the trumpet was not commonly employed as a warlike instrument in the days of Homer: unless we can suppose a perpetual caution against all anachronism and anticipation, in every instance perfectly scrupulous and exact; with a sacrifice, at the same time, perfectly unaccountable, of every opportunity for similitude, allusion, and illustration from the customs and peculiarities in question, which had been introduced within the interval of the Trojan war and his own days; whence, as poetry might receive frequent embellishment, it is perfectly inconceivable, that a man of taste and fancy should not employ.

Clemens Alexandrinus || tells us, that chaplets of flowers in festival entertainments were not known to the ancient Greeks; and accordingly are not attributed by Homer either to the luxurious suitors or effeminate Phæacians. Our learned author ascribes the first introduction of flowery crowns to the public games of the Grecian states. Now the first Olympiad is placed by the generality of chronologers ¶ about the year 884 antecedent to the Christian æra.

\* See *Iliad* r. 3—7. to which passage Pausanias alludes.

† *Ajax*, ver. 17.

‡ At the *Phœnissæ*, ver. 1386. See also Aurelius Victor, cap. ix. 8, and the commentators there, for more authorities on this point.

§ See *Iliad* ε. 219.

|| *Pædag.* ii. p. 212. ed. Oxon.

¶ I speak thus guardedly with a view to the chronological system of Sir Isaac Newton, which appears to me, who am not competent to decide on this subject, unassailable on the ground of Heathen testimony.

Pliny\* remarks, that unguents, or *mixed perfumes*†, were unknown in the times of the Trojan war. Accordingly, neither the term *μύρον*, by which those unguents are denominated, nor even *λίβανος*, Eastern incense, is found in the poems of Homer: who could scarcely, therefore, be much acquainted with their use; and that use must of course have been partial in his age.

It is almost certain from Homer's silence, when so many opportunities of mentioning an artifice, wonderful beyond all example, presented themselves, that *alphabetical writing*, which migrated from the East into the States of Greece at a very early period, was not known to Homer and his contemporaries. The tablets, which Homer consigned to the care of Bellerophon‡, could be only marked with certain emblematical or hieroglyphic characters, in currency at that period; and the scholiast properly reminds us§, that, as each of the Grecian chiefs are said to *mark* his lot, before he cast it into the helmet, alphabetical writing was not practised by Homer's heroes.

In addition to these observations, which may contribute their assistance in fixing the precise time at which Homer flourished, and which certainly exhibit cogent presumptions in favour of the high antiquity of that æra; I shall put together a few thoughts of another kind, respecting Homer; in my judgment, not destitute of probability, and therefore worthy of communication in this place: first premising, that, though they may appear derogatory in some measure to the reputation of the father of Poetry, as an unparalleled inventor, they will solve a puzzling

\* Nat. Hist. xiii. 1.

† See my *Silva Critica*, part v. p. 57, and the reader may find more on this topic in Athenæus, Deipn. i. 15, and on the subject in general in Huntingford's apology for his *Monostrophics*. From an ignorance of the distinct sense of *μύρα* or *mixed perfumes*, arose that erroneous criticism of our countryman in *Iliad* xiv. 198.

‡ *Iliad* Z. 168.

§ At *Iliad* II. 175.



problem in the theory of the human mind, and may contribute indeed to fix that reputation on the durable basis of true and rational deductions.

We are generally instructed to believe, that Poetry issued from the hands of Homer, like Minerva from the brain of Jupiter, perfect and mature at once, without the customary progress from lisping infancy to the full articulation of maturer years : a supposition, irreconcilable at once to reason, to history, and experience ; a disposition, inconsistent with the invariable process attendant on every intellectual operation of humanity, which is doomed to labour through all the intermediate gradations of improvement to the summit of complete efficiency. The same bold theory, which no ingenuity can defend, is imputable to the invention of Alphabetic Characters, upon the prevalent hypothesis ; by which that most curious and matchless art is attributed to the progressive exertions of mental sagacity and experiment\*. Now, in addition to this philosophical incongruity, which amounts to little less than a physical impossibility, and is, abstractedly considered, all but an effect without a cause ; a remarkable fact obtrudes itself on our notice, subversive of this very prevalent, but wild, imagination. The poetry of Hesiod, but especially his epic speci-

\* See my essay on this subject in the *Memoirs of the Manchester Philosophical Society* ; or, with improvements, in my own *Memoirs*. In *Godwin's Political Justice*, vol. i. p. 47, this question is stated with a fulness and fairness very honourable to the candour of that writer, considering the intractability of this subject to his purpose ; and is answered with equal imbecility. I will venture to assert, that no man living can give any thing like a political solution of this problem, consistently with either history, experience, or philosophy : and that Alphabetical Writing will stand an unassailable bulwark against all the batteries of Atheism, and a most powerful presumption against even Deism itself, to the end of time. If I thought the public saw this subject in so striking a light as that in which I cannot but consider it, I would give a separate edition of that essay, with very numerous and important corroborations of the position, on which it proceeds.

men, "The Shield of Hercules," which is not excelled, I think, in real sublimity of thought, or splendour of versification, by any portion of the Iliad, with which it can be properly compared; this poem, I say, so exactly resembles the acknowledged works of Homer, not only in the character of it's numbers, and in every circumstance of phraseology, but the adoption too of similar epithets, kindred expressions, and verses of the same structure; that either one must have borrowed from the other, or both must have drawn their supplies from the same common fountain. But, as no historical tradition, and no internal peculiarity, will authorise us to exculpate one of these poets from the charge of plagiarism at the expence of the other; so such a supposition will give us no assistance, at all adequate to the present exigency, in explaining that philosophical difficulty just stated, with respect to Homer's instantaneous perfection, as it were, in the poetic art. We discover then no alternative, to which recourse can be had for the solution of our problem, but that of some common original, some pre-existing models of poetical execution; by which both these favourites of the Muses were disciplined to that pitch of excellence, which has been acknowledged in their writings by the best literary judges of every succeeding age to the present day: an acknowledgment, not imputable, I am persuaded, to an undistinguishing veneration for antiquity, or a senseless acquiescence in the dogmatical edicts of former critics. We know very well, that poetical effusions of untutored genius are not uncommon even in that stage of political imperfection, which school-taught pride has too rudely stigmatised with the name of savage life; and that Poetry is at least the invariable concomitant of encreasing civilization and refining manners. Is it not morally certain then, that a numerous race of bards must have exercised their genius in so polished a language as that of Greece was undoubtedly become in the days of Homer, for several



generations before the birth of their immortal successor ; of which indeed that language itself, thus methodized and attuned, is of itself a silent, but irrefragable, proof? The histories of Orpheus, Amphion, and many others, are blended, doubtless, with a copious infusion of traditionary fiction ; and the merit of these poetical theologians is seen enlarged through the misty medium of mythological obscurity ; but the tuneful predecessors of the Homeric age, amounting to no less than seventy in number, according to Fabricius\*, must have made, with some abatements from this catalogue (though many certainly existed, unknown to written records now in being) such improvements in their art, as must contribute greatly to the perfection of all their followers. But, as in a building, the foundation, which is the more important part, is concealed under ground, while the superstructure, supported by it alone, is seen, and engrosses our admiration ; so Homer has concentrated in himself that blaze of glory, which the irradiations of former ages must have essentially contributed to form : and, as honey, though collected from every variety of plants and flowers abundantly diversified in the quality of their sweets, becomes one luscious mass, in which no individual flavour is now perceptible† ; so the poetry of Homer compounds

\* See the beginning of his *Bibliotheca Græca*.

† Waller in his *Chloris* and *Hylas* :

Sweetest ! you know the sweetest of things  
Of various flowers the bees do compose ;  
Yet no particular taste it brings  
Of violet, woodbine, pink, or rose :  
So Love the result is of all the graces,  
Which flow from a thousand several faces.

Of this elegant comparison Quintilian was the source, *Inst.* i. 10, in a passage of superlative excellence : *Nisi fortè antidotum quidè, atque alia, quæ morbis et vulneribus medentur, ex multis atque interim contrariis quoque inter se effectibus componi videmus, quorum ex diversis fit illa mixtura una, quæ nulli eorum similis est, quibus constat, sed proprias vires ex omnibus sumit : et muta animalia mellis illum inimitabilem*

and absorbs the separate excellencies of all the musical fraternity that preceded him. Nor am I unpersuaded, that the standing epithets of his Gods and Heroes, with other appropriate forms of speech, were already provided to his hands, and become sanctified by long prescription to invariable use. Whether any other assistances might be derived by Homer, who probably makes but few excursions in the main facts beyond the high road of authentic history, from the remains of older bards, in the general plan and structure of his wonderful performances, the eye of Criticism cannot possibly descry, from her low elevation on the wreck of literature, through the palpable darkness and wide waste of such remote antiquity.

From these previous observations on the poetry and age of Homer, my attention must be now directed to our illustrious countryman, the sublime and elegant translator of this prime hero in the grand assemblage of ancient genius. Of the qualifications requisite for such an arduous undertaking, both from its nature and extent, it cannot be disputed, that POPE was endowed with sympathetic Genius, with a delicate perception of poetic beauty, a trembling sensibility, prepared to vibrate at every impulse of sentimental passion, an ear finely tuned, by the hand of Nature and the key of art, to the voice of melody ; with a comprehensive dominion over all the poetical versatilities of language, and all the harmonious capacities of English verse: that these qualifications, I say, were concentrated in Pope, the texture of his original compositions, richly beauteous and delicately graceful, abundantly demonstrates.

*humanæ rationi saporem, vario florum ac succorum genere perficiunt: nos mirabimur, si oratio, quæ nihil præstantius homini dedit providentia, pluribus artibus eget; quæ etiàm, cùm se non ostendunt in dicendo nec proferunt, vim tamèn occultam suggerunt, et tacitè quoque sentiuntur:—* alluding to Virgil, *Geo. iii. 397.*

*Et salis occultum referunt in lacte saporem.*



But another endowment, eminently advantageous to a faithful execution of such a project, the competency of his learning, I mean, may be the subject of reasonable controversy; and, as my opinion of him in this respect exceeds, I believe to his prejudice, that ever entertained of him to this hour, not only by neutral readers, but even by those who have shown themselves most inclined to disparage his attainments in the learned languages; I shall engage in a circumstantial discussion of this point, and lay at once my collection of evidences before the public, without fear and without reserve: conscious as I am, that my supreme admiration of the poetical powers of this extraordinary man, which has bordered on enthusiasm from my very infancy, will amply secure, with the dispassionate and candid, my exertions on this argument, without an appeal to general character, from every suspicion of petulant singularity, pedantic affectation, or barbarous malignity. In these respects I can adopt, I trust, the words of Horace with indisputable appropriation:

— Hic nigræ succus loliginis, hæc est  
Ærugo mera: quod vitium procùl abfore chartis,  
Atque animo priùs, ut si quid promittere de me  
Possum aliud verè, promitto.

With what accuracy and to what extent Pope may have pursued his juvenile application to the languages of Greece and Rome, I would not presume to specify: but we know that a ready and familiar intercourse with these difficult and copious tongues is not to be maintained, but by vigorous exertion and unrelaxing industry. I shall first state, however, in few words my deliberate opinion on this point, and shall subjoin my reasons for it: I shall afterwards corroborate my position by an investigation of all the material evidence on record, either in the declarations of Pope himself, or in the testimonies of his acquaintance.

It is my persuasion then, that our poet, far from apprehending with suitable promptitude the original language of the author, whom he undertook to exhibit in an English dress, was not so familiarly acquainted even with the Latin tongue, as to form an instantaneous conception of a passage by reading Homer in the Latin interpretation of him, that accompanies the school editions: by which expression I understand such a ready conception of a sentence, as would enable a reader to give an adequate translation of it with a fidelity, that superseded a repeated and laborious perusal; a perusal, altogether incompatible, it is evident, with a timely execution of so long a work. In proof of this assertion, I can decisively pronounce, after an experimental examination of his whole performance, that he appears uniformly to have collected the general purport of every passage from some of his predecessors, Dryden, Dacier, Chapman, or Ogilby: a process, not to be supposed, for a moment, invariably pursued by any man, capable of forming a distinct, and, generally speaking, a true delineation of his author from the verbal metaphor of a Latin version. The truth of this declaration will admit of no controversy after a practical examination shall be instituted by a specific comparison of our poet's version with those of the translators here mentioned: a truth, sufficiently corroborated by our ability to refer all his misrepresentations, which are frequent, and in many cases singular and gross, with all his alterations and additions, which are innumerable, to one or other of his predecessors; except in very few instances, which analogy will set to the account of my incompetency, from reading not sufficiently extensive and imperfect information, to trace all his authorities and assistances, rather than ascribe this failure to a fundamental error in my supposition. But the notes, I presume, which I have interspersed through the course of the poems, will ascertain this determination beyond all possibility of contradiction.



An additional presumption, of great cogency, in support of Pope's ignorance in the Greek and Roman languages, may reasonably be rested on the strange and scandalous blunders in the typography of the Greek and Latin quotations throughout the notes on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, for which the superior correctness of the English part will not allow any other assignable cause whatever. I thought it proper, as an incontrovertible and indelible testimony to this effect, as the question may excite further discussion and inquiry, that most of these quotations should be left with all the improprieties of that edition, which past under his own inspection; and particularly with the original singularities of punctuation, which could never have been so exhibited (though his system in this respect, it must be owned, with regard to his own language is unaccountably extraordinary) by one but moderately familiar with the phraseology of his extracts. To furnish some examples out of many, the reader is referred to the notes on *Iliad* iii. 280. *Odyssey* xii. 485. and to v. 28. for a most ignominious and puerile mistake of the language of his author. But nothing can more loudly proclaim his ignorance of the Greek, or, if he were acquainted with it, his inexcusable negligence in omitting to consult it, than the most vicious pronunciation of proper names, throughout the poem: so mistaking and confounding even the long and short vowels with each other, as to prove, when he is right, that he is right by accident: see *Iliad* 756. v. 705. *Odyssey* iii. 575. xii. 483. This species of blunder, however, has been frequently adverted to in my notes, as occasion offered. But a singular proof how much he translated on the authority of others without recourse to his original, is furnished in the note on *Iliad* iii. 475. for which my thanks are due to one, qualified by the correctest taste and the most exquisite learning, beyond all competition, for the illustration of these subjects.

Besides, such of Pope's notes, as contain any quotations from the learned languages, or any references to ancient

authors, are in most instances uniformly ascribed to their proper owners, Eustathius, Dacier, and Spondanus: some, however, deduced from the same sources, are not acknowledged, either from forgetfulness, or (as there is but too much reason to surmise) a disingenuous affectation of erudition, very inconsistent with those professions of good faith and impartial distribution, so explicitly exhibited in the preliminary observations to his version. For this reason, the few learned remarks, for which my circumscribed excursions have not been able to find an owner, may be concluded, I apprehend, upon the fairest probability, of a congenial extraction with the rest.

Broome and Fenton, his coadjutors in the *Odyssey*, enjoyed the advantages of a regular and academical education. Accordingly, their obligations to Dacier, Chapman, and Ogilby, either for sense or rhyme, will be found far less frequent, than those of Pope.

It may be rejoined, however, and with much plausibility, and even truth, as a general remark, that in traversing a country, which has been passed by a former traveller of reputation, we are insensibly fascinated by the charm of such an association, into the path of our predecessors, when a more direct road was obvious; and even when the propensity of our guide to deviation and irregularity was too well known. We have indeed a very remarkable and apposite instance of this position in our poet's blind adherence to Dryden in his translation of the first *Iliad*. Though Pope was so well aware of his master's immoralities in literature, (greatly palliated, no doubt, by the untowardness of his situation) we see our poet, nevertheless, falling into the most flagrant absurdities and wild misrepresentations of that rambling version, when Dacier was open before him, and so well qualified to furnish the true purport of his author.

Of the same fascination from the predominant influence of a great example, we have no less singular proof in the case even of Broome himself, who has left a decisive speci-



men of his classical abilities in an elegant Latin ode preserved in his works ; and who, therefore, is a witness in this cause beyond all exception. He has given us a translation of part of the tenth Iliad in the style of Milton ; one or two quotations from which will suffice to show the reader, how he followed the steps of Pope, from undistinguishing reverence, or supine carelessness, when Pope had given a very inaccurate exhibition of the original.

Ver. 15. of that book is thus rendered by Pope :

*He rends his hairs in sacrifice to Jove ;*

and thus copied in his interpretation by Broome :

———— now from his royal head

*Rends the fair curl in sacrifice to Jove.*

See my note on the passage. Verse 85. runs thus in Homer :

Speak, nor approach in silence : tell thy will.

Pope renders :

Stand off, approach not, but thy purpose tell :

by the spirit of which Broome seems to have been led a step further from his author :

Speak instant ; silent to advance is *death*.

But I forbear : for, though other instances might readily be adduced, for want of dates in the life of Broome, I cannot certainly determine, whether his translation of this, and part of the eleventh book, might not be prior in time to Pope's. I should suppose otherwise, from various considerations : if not, a comparison of the two versions, with a view to point out the obligations of Pope, would have been a curious and entertaining part of my undertaking.

Now, after this accumulation of internal evidence, which appears to me upon the whole incapable of evasion, and demonstrably declarative of the justice of my persuasion on this subject ; let us turn our attention in the next place to what our poet has incidentally testified of himself, and to the judgment and information of his contemporaries.

The most express testimony of Pope himself to this effect, within my recollection, occurs in his imitation of the second epistle in the second book of Horace, verse 52\*.

Bred up at home, full early I begun  
*To read in Greek the wrath of Peleus' son.*

As this passage, however, ascertains an *attempt* only, without any intimation of proficiency, we might leave it as we find it without any detriment to the position, which I maintain, and without reserve of allowance for the prompt accommodation of an imitator to his model; if Warburton's note on the verse did not put in a claim with considerable emphasis on behalf of the classical erudition of our poet. "At eight," we are told, "Pope was put under one *Taverner*, "a priest, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and "Greek tongues together. From him, in a little time, he "was sent to a private school at Twiford, near Winchester. "Here he continued about a year; and was then removed "to another near Hyde-Park corner. Under these two "last masters, he lost the little he had got under the "priest. At twelve, he went with his father into the Forest; "where he was, for a few months, under another priest, "and with as little success as before."

So far, it is plain, his knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages must be slender indeed. At *eight* years of age he had been, for a short time only, initiated in the rudiments; and his learning, for the next *four* years, is represented as stationary at best, if not retrograde. But our commentator, whose energy and decision were conspicuous in all his undertakings, thus proceeds: "He at length "thought fit to become his own master. So that, while he "was intent upon the subject, with a strong appetite for "knowledge, and an equal passion for poetry, he insensi- "bly got Latin and Greek. And, what was extraordinary,

\* Romæ nutriti mihi contigit, atque doceri,  
 Iratus Graiis quantum nocuisset Achilles.



“ his impatience of restraint, in the usual forms, did not  
 “ hinder his subjecting himself, now he was his own master,  
 “ to all the drudgery and fatigue of perpetually recurring  
 “ to his Grammar and Lexicon.”

Now who does not descry upon the very surface of this narrative, if not an appearance of contradiction between an *insensible* and *laborious* acquisition of knowledge at the same time and in the same person, at least a romantic exaggeration, with a view to aggrandise the subject of his encomium, and to supersede the circumstantial specification of direct proof, by superinducing the veil of indistinct and general panegyric? In opposition to these pompous, but gratuitous pretensions, I might content myself with confronting only those allegations, founded on existing and unquestionable documents, before adduced; but I shall rather prefer a reply in the words of Pope himself, which virtually contain a positive confutation of this rambling statement, warped from the line of truth by the potent and combined attractions of reverence for the Genius and affection for the man.

“ The \*greater part of these deviations from the Greek  
 “ which you have observed, I was led into by Chapman  
 “ and Hobbes: who are (it seems) as much celebrated for  
 “ their knowledge of the original, as they are decried for  
 “ the badness of their translations. For my part, I gene-  
 “ rally took the author’s meaning to be as you have ex-  
 “ plained it: yet their authority, joined to the knowledge  
 “ of my own imperfectness in the language, over-ruled me.”

We may descry in this passage, under the cover of ingenuous acknowledgement, a lurking affectation, which impairs considerably the merit of so frank a confession of insufficiency, by an ungracious reserve in behalf of his independant acceptance of his author: this, however, whether sincere or not, will by no means vouch the large pretensions of Warburton in his behalf. The remainder of

\* Pope’s Letter to Mr. Bridges, subjoined to his life by Dr. Johnson.

the letter, to which I refer, will appear to every sagacious reader a genteel but artful attempt to undervalue critical attainments, by a superior commendation of poetic powers; yet not unattended by a wish at the same time to convey an opinion of no slender acquirements in that very department of literature, which he is endeavouring to depreciate; in consequence rather, he would wish us to conclude, of an experimental conviction of its insufficiency and unimportance, than from any defect of information in himself.

But now breaks in upon the glimmering twilight of our inquiries the flaming testimony of Dr. Blair\*! a testimony, as Longinus remarks of the eloquence of Demosthenes, calculated to confound, and shiver into atoms by a single blast, all our meagre and insipid probabilities, in an instant.

“ I remember also distinctly, (though I have not for this  
 “ the authority of my journal) that the conversation going  
 “ on concerning Mr. Pope, I took notice of a report which  
 “ had been sometimes propagated, that he did not under-  
 “ stand Greek. Lord Bathurst said to me, that he knew  
 “ that to be false; for that part of the Iliad was translated  
 “ by Mr. Pope in his house in the country; and that in the  
 “ morning when they assembled at breakfast, Mr. Pope  
 “ used frequently to repeat, with great rapture, the Greek  
 “ lines which he had been translating, and then to give  
 “ them his version of them, and to compare them together.”

Now I may safely challenge any unprejudiced person, at all acquainted with the circumstances of this question, not to confess immediately his persuation of some essential exaggeration in the statement before us; resulting either from the memory or misconception of the relator, or from some involuntary deception on the part of Lord Bathurst. His Lordship, in the former case, it is possible, from a failure in his eye-sight, might mistake some old English print for Greek characters; or see no books at all, and Pope truly

\* See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iii. 199 of the 8vo. edition.



translate at his house, but from Chapman, Dacier, and Ogilby: and, in the latter circumstance of comparing the version with its original, even Pope himself, under the operation of vanity and self-importance, might make this ostentatious exhibition of his pretended erudition before a company, whose slender acquirements he knew would qualify them to become the dupes of such a solemn imposition. However this be, it is most certain, and demonstrable from experiment, that no portion of Pope's translation for ten lines together can endure a contrast with his author without manifest proof of the possibility of melioration by closer adherence to him, with no sacrifice, at the same time, of elegance and spirit: such a melioration too, as a proficient in the Greek language must be supposed desirous to accomplish, as well from inclination as from duty, and against which not an argument, I apprehend, accompanied by a mere shadowy semblance of probability, can be alleged by the versatile ingenuity of the most sagacious and devoted advocate. The remaining particular of Dr. Blair's report, which relates to the *sonorous spoutings* of Mr. Pope, reminds me of a child, who was taught, like the parrot from his cage, by an absurd preceptress, to mouth an ode of Anacreon in astonishment of the gaping ladies, before he could articulate even his mother tongue; and may be amusingly contrasted with the facetious dialogue between the Surgeon and Parson Adams, from the pen of Fielding:

“The company were all attentive, expecting to hear  
 “the doctor, who was what they call a dry fellow, expose  
 “the gentleman.

“He began therefore with an air of triumph: I suppose, Sir! you have travelled? No, really, Sir! said  
 “the gentleman. Ho! then you have practised in the  
 “hospitals, perhaps?—No, Sir! Hum! not that neither?  
 “Whence, Sir! then, if I may be so bold to enquire,  
 “have you got your knowledge in surgery? From books.

“ Books! cries the doctor. What! I suppose you have  
 “ read Galen and Hippocrates! No, Sir! said the gentle-  
 “ man. How! you understand surgery, answers the  
 “ doctor, and not read Galen and Hippocrates!—I very  
 “ seldom go without them both in my pocket. They are  
 “ pretty large books! said the gentleman. Aye, said the  
 “ doctor, I believe I know how large they are better than  
 “ you. (At which he fell a winking, and the whole com-  
 “ pany burst into a laugh).—

“ I suppose, brother, you understand Latin? A little, says  
 “ the gentleman. Aye, and Greek now, I’ll warrant you:

“ Ton dapomibominos poluflosboio Thalasses.

“ But I have almost forgot these things: I could have  
 “ repeated Homer by heart once.—Ifags! the gentleman  
 “ has caught a *Traytor*, says Mrs. Towwouse: at which they  
 “ all fell a laughing.”

After this unpalatable and hazardous enquiry into the  
 classical attainments of our poet, it will not be unseasonable  
 to say a few words respecting the notes, which accompany  
 the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of his own edition.

In general, the selection which has been made from Eu-  
 stathius, Dacier, Spondanus, and other commentators, is  
 not injudicious, nor ill calculated to illustrate and vindicate  
 his author. Some of a critical and philological complexion  
 are impertinent and empty in the extreme: pompous inani-  
 ties! such as might be presupposed to appear in a casual  
 collection by one, who rashly ventured to overstep the  
 province prescribed to his operations by Nature and by  
 Study. Most of these I have passed by uncensured, as  
 derogatory to the dignity of criticism; when the unlearned  
 reader would not have profited from critical correction, and  
 the learned could not require it. Such notes as appear  
 altogether original, which are few in number, come recom-  
 mended to our acceptance by those unequivocal marks of



taste and fancy, of urbanity and acuteness, which could not but distinguish the spontaneous animadversions of so fine a genius upon the illustrious founder of his profession, and the great exemplar of the poetic art. In this light, the notes of Pope are very valuable and curious.

With respect to the notes on the *Odyssey*, I vehemently suspect, I must acknowledge, some undiscovered imposition upon the public. These are generally ascribed to Broome, and are indeed asserted as his own by Broome himself, in the concluding note to this poem. And yet, if I mistake not, a reader of sagacity will descry in many of them a delicacy of thought and a gaiety of expression, indubitably characteristic of Pope himself: and it is scarcely conceivable, that such a teeming imagination should translate twelve books of the *Odyssey*, and correct the remainder, without overflowing in some remarks on such an extraordinary and interesting performance. In corroboration of my suspicion, I wish the reader to consult in particular the notes on verses 24 and 192 of the xvth book.

I feel myself engaged with an ungracious topic, but seek a shelter from the malice of insinuation under a conscious rectitude of purpose, and a determination to discharge, to the best of my abilities, the duty of an editor to the publick. I must insist, therefore, that it will be in vain to combat the reasonableness of my conjecture, by opposing the improbability of an useless falshood on this occasion, whilst we are acquainted with such repeated proofs of insincerity and absurd deception, with regard to the distinct portions of translation, severally executed by our triumvirate. Broome, in the last note of the *Odyssey*, deliberately states his performance to have been the 6th, 11th, and 18th books, and that of Fenton, the 4th and 20th; but, in the postscript to this poem, Pope himself, as if determined, from the compunction of repentance for this delusion of the publick on the part of his coadjutor, to make an ample and ingenuous

confession of the truth, aggravates their offence by an odious repetition of imposture, under the specious pretence of a final and more scrupulous adjustment of their respective claims. "What assistance I received," says he, "was made known in general to the publick in the original proposals for this work, and the particulars are specified at the conclusion of it: to which I must add (to be punctually just) some part of the 10th and 15th books."

Now the disingenuous chicanery of this solemn adjudication is universally acknowledged from abundant evidence; and may be collected, moreover, from my preliminary note to the first book of the *Odyssey*.

If we turn our attention from this unpleasing reprehension to the translation itself, and consider the great extent and multifarious difficulties of such an undertaking, we must pronounce it an unrivalled effort, in it's kind, of ingenuity and taste. In the descriptive parts of the poem, such as the catalogue of the ships and the list of warriors, the translation of our countryman is at least equal to it's original: and in the sublimer exhibitions of Homer's genius, particularly the descriptions of his battles, our English bard seems instinct with all the genuine fire, with all the divine enthusiasm, of his sublime exemplar, and kindles in his progress with the unborrowed raptures of native rage. His failings (for even the *Iliad* of Pope is stamped with this signature of Humanity) may be ranked, I think, under the following heads: 1. A defect in suitable fidelity to his author: 2. A want of simplicity: 3. Unnecessary and incongruous additions: 4. Careless or injudicious omissions; and, 5. lastly, Unpardonable rhymes, whether of dissimilar sound, or vicious pronunciation. I shall presume to offer a few remarks upon each of these particulars.

#### 1. Want of Fidelity.

This defect must not be ascribed to negligence, indolence, or precipitation, causes highly culpable, but to his igno-



rance of the dead languages; or at least to that slender acquaintance with them, which could not ascertain the sense of a paragraph with a facility and expedition compatible with so long a task. Hence Pope was necessitated, at a period too late for laborious studies, to consult his ease by resorting to such guides as were accessible to his enquiries: an irreparable disadvantage this, and a lasting occasion of regret to those who would have been gratified by a more exact representation of the Father of ancient poetry in such a garb: that is, to every admirer of the English muse. It would be possible, beyond all controversy, to model Pope's version to an exact conformity with it's prototype: but such an accommodation, with whatever taste and elegance it might be accomplished, and with whatever preservation of every real ornament of the present version, would never please; partly from a prepossession, not to be eradicated, in favour of so great an artist, which would not allow it's proper merit to an execution of this nature; and partly from an unconquerable propensity in the mind to revolt with irreconcilable antipathy to such a motley composition of discordant workmanship. The notation, however, of such infidelities has it's use, both in furnishing the true sense of Homer to those unacquainted with his language, and in quickening the diligence and exciting the ambition of future adventurers, by shewing the inefficiency of even the finest genius, unseconded by every auxiliary of art and learning.

## 2. Want of Simplicity.

In the present instance, the consequences of this defect, namely, dissimilarity and incongruity of character, are more lamentable from their importance, than those originating in any other source. Homer is not more valuable to the votary of poesy for his numbers and his fancy, than to the historian, the moralist, and the philosopher, for his facts and manners. He is, in the first place, with an exception of Hesiod only, by far the most ancient specimen of heathen literature now

extant in the world. His poems comprise an extensive delineation of the geographical, astronomical, physical, and medical attainments of his contemporaries; they exhibit the religious sentiments and devotional practices of numerous nations, the most renowned of antiquity; the various policies of the most civilized countries in Europe and in Asia; the whole economy of social institutions and domestic manners; and, in short, whatever can contribute to ascertain the peculiarities of condition, and the extent of civilization, as it respects intellectual improvement, political stability, and manual dexterities, in those remote ages of the world. An accurate representation, therefore, in their own tongue, of such a poem, which may be stiled with propriety *the mirror of ancient times*, would certainly be an invaluable acquisition to that numerous class of literary enquirers, whose education and opportunities have not been favourable to a full acquirement of the Greek language. Now, in many instances, our illustrious countryman, partly, it should seem, from a certain sickliness of taste, and partly from a desire of compliance with the false delicacy of fastidious readers, has omitted, or disguised, characteristic circumstances of his author, which he supposed would not appear, without danger of disgust, in modern poetry. Thus the native lineaments of Homer are sometimes buried, and sometimes distorted, by the indiscriminate colouring of modern art: the wine is well-bodied, rich, and flavourous; but has lost by adulterate infusion something of that congenial raciness, which indicates and distinguishes the parent soil. This defect of true taste, or rather this accommodated deviation from it, is the more remarkable, as our translator, with a singular inconsistency, enlarges in several places of his notes on the essential importance of his author, as characteristic of the simple customs and inartificial manners of those early ages of the world. It is not improbable, I think, that Roscommon, whom Pope justly revered, might have



some share in fixing the sentiments of the public and of our translator, by those excellent verses in his Essay on translated verse, immediately connected with our present subject.

For who, without a qualm, has ever look'd  
On holy garbage\*, though by Homer cook'd;  
Whose railing heroes, and whose wounded Gods,  
Make some suspect he snores, as well as nods†.

But, in my judgment, (to comment on the case here specified, though not particularly applicable to this occasion from a failure of Pope on that passage) a minute detail of such a curious operation, as that of an ancient feast on sacrifice, will readily compensate a hazard of disgust from the employment of terms, intrinsically unoffending, and merely rendered obnoxious by superinduced sentiments and usages, wholly unauthorised by the simple suggestions of Truth and Nature‡. These artificial disaffections have been productive of much inconvenience both in the concerns of literature, by annihilating a considerable portion of serviceable language to the squeamish writer, and in the habitudes of common life. All such acquired niceties are indeed in some respects justly regarded as the criterion of depraved opinion and immoral practice; as the incentives of vice and lust, unknown among nations in the primæval simplicity of innocence, and doomed to final obliteration from that consummation of human virtue, which Reason proclaims to be attainable from the perfectibility of our Nature, and to which we are strenuously exhorted by the reiterated precepts of Christian purity: for, as the satirist justly teaches,

\* Alluding to Iliad i. 459—467. ver. 600—612. of Pope's translation.

† In allusion to Horace, Art. Poët. 359.

—idemque

Indignor, quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.

‡ Quiâ nec sit vox ulla naturâ turpis. Quint. inst. orat. viii. 3.

Nunquàm aliud Natura, aliud Sapientia, dixit:  
Religion's voice, and Nature's, is the same.

On this subject our epic poet, (to whose merits as a poet, a patriot, and a man, it is not easy for Panegyric to be just) has expressed himself with a manly indignation, becoming the rigorous sanctity of his character:

Then was not guilty Shame, dishonest Shame,  
Of Nature's works, Honour dishonourable.  
Sin-bred! how have ye troubled all mankind  
With shews instead, mere shews of seeming pure;  
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,  
Simplicity and spotless Innocence!\*

### 3. Unnecessary and incongruous additions.

It will happen not unfrequently, from the character of English versification and the inevitable circumstances of a passage, that a couplet, or a verse, must of necessity be fabricated from a portion of the author not verbally commensurate to the quantity of version requisite to complete the period: in which case the amplification, or addition, now become indispensable, should harmonize with the peculiar scope of the context, and the general character of the writer. Let me explain my meaning by one or two examples upon this point.

At Iliad ii. 731, it was found convenient to construct more than one English verse from the following portions of *two* in Homer:

Ἀσκληπίου δύο παῖδες,

Ἰητὴρ ἄγαθω:

Two good physicians, Æsculapius' sons.

This sense, it is plain, without injurious defalcation,

\* Apud Sallustium dicta sanctè, et antiquè, ridentur à nobis:—quam culpam non scribentium quidè judico, sed legentium;—quatenùs verba honesta moribus perdidimus. Quintil. inst. orat. viii. 3.



could scarcely be included, by any possibility of contrivance, in a single verse: there was no alternative, therefore, even under that concession, but a triplet, of which Pope was not fond, and which, frequently employed, would be unacceptable to the generality of modern readers; or otherwise of an entire couplet. The latter expedient seemed preferable to the translator: and accordingly, by a dextrous amplification and a periphrasis incomparably elegant, in complete unison with the spirit and sentiment of his author, he has executed the passage with a felicity of excellence, that fills up the largest expectation of the most admiring votary of Pope:

To them his skill their Parent-God imparts,  
Divine professors of the healing arts.

The reader will be pleased, perhaps, with another specimen also of venial expansion, in which no extraneous and unsuitable thought is introduced, but a perfect correspondence in every respect with the tenour of his original is happily preserved: a specimen that rises to the highest point of ingenuity, taste, and beauty; delightful, beyond the delineations of language, to the genuine feelings of poetic rapture.

*Καν τότε δὴ μιν ἐπισσιν ἀμειβομενος προσεείπον.*

*Ω Κίρκη, τίς γὰρ ταύτην ὁδὸν ἡγεμονεύσει;*

*Εἰς Αἴδος δ' ὃ πῶ τις ἀφικέτο νηὶ μελαίνῃ:*

of which, for the information of the English reader, and to display with more justice and perspicuity the consummate elegance and skill of Pope, I shall subjoin a literal translation:

Her with these answering words I then address:  
But on that way, O! Circe, who shall guide?  
None yet reacht Pluto's dome in sable ship.

Hear now the voice of poetic inspiration, in a blissful strain of immortality!

How shall I tread, I cried, oh! Circe, say,  
The dark descent? and who shall guide the way?  
Can living eyes behold the realms below?  
What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?

Of some thoughts, engrafted on the original, it is not so easy to decide, whether they merit praise or reprehension: at the same time that they are unnecessary, they are not incongruous; elegant, but adventitious; such as may be denominated not unaptly, ingenious superfluities: upon these, I say, it were hazardous to pronounce a positive sentence of condemnation. In Iliad x. 9, the couplet

By fits one flash succeeds, and one expires;  
And heaven flames thick with momentary fires:

is an addition of the translator, with a view to facilitate and clear the connection between the comparison and the subject; to which purpose it is indeed well adapted. Again, in Iliad xxi. 73, where I find less difficulty in determining, of the following verse,

Earth, whose strong grasp has held down Hercules:

the sentiment is general in Homer, and the specification of Hercules is too bold, and an appendage of the translator, who found this singular innovation ready to his hands in Chapman. So in that fine passage of Dryden's Virgil, *Æn.* xii. 1351, less liable to exception, as conformable to truth in a very apposite instance and on a very critical occasion:

Ye think, oh! think, if mercy may be shewn,  
(Thou hadst a father once, *and hast a son*)

that pathetic clause in Italics is not found in Virgil. It may be deemed, I am aware, a pedantic austerity of criticism, and a meagre deficiency of taste, to pass a cold sentence of disapprobation on such happy efforts of inventive enthusiasm: but the first and indispensable requisite of translation, is a punctual exhibition of the author, without exaggeration, diminution, and distortion: so that deviations



of this kind, upon a disinterested view of the subject, are barely sufferable after all on the score of extraordinary merit, and in case of failure must incur unavoidably an unqualified condemnation.

With respect to incongruous interpolations, of such a character, as disfigure, misrepresent, and pervert the model, no indulgence can be given *them*. Some such occur even in Pope's translation of the Iliad and Odyssey; but, as they are pointed out in the notes, a distinct exemplification here may be thought superfluous.

4. Careless, or injudicious, omissions.

Various defects of this class were inevitable in our poet's version, from a cause largely insisted on before; namely, his ignorance of the Greek and Latin languages; or, if that should not be conceded, what would be equivalent in it's operation on the present topic, but much more censurable, his inattention to his author, and the contemplation of him through the medium of previous translations only; such defects, I say, were inevitable, unless we could suppose an undeviating fidelity throughout on the part of his predecessors. My notes are so generally occupied in animadverting upon improprieties of this description, as to render a particular investigation unnecessary now.

5. Unpardonable rhymes, of dissimilar sound, or affected pronunciation.

Rhymes of the former imperfection occur in every page, and are abundantly noted by me in my progress through the poem: my meaning in the latter shall be unfolded by one example, from Iliad xiii. 161:

Nor deem this day, this battle, all you *lose*;  
A day more black, a fate more vile, *ensues* :

and one from Odyssey xii. 397:

There o'er my hands the living wave I *pour*;  
And Heaven and Heaven's immortal thrones adore.

The latter, most vicious, and, to my taste, insufferably

barbarous pronunciation, though very prevalent in our times also, is the less allowable, as it confounds the word in question with another of very different signification : and a language is essentially injured by a voluntary accession of inconveniences, arising from this confusion, too frequent already in most, and abundantly in our own. To him, who shall be inclined to censure this judgment as unreasonably severe, or affectedly delicate, I shall reply in the words of Horace, as rendered by Roscommon in a pure tenuity of unlaboured diction, well adapted to didactic poetry\* :

Remember this as an important truth ;  
 Some things admit of mediocrity :  
 A counsellor, or pleader at the bar,  
 May want Messala's powerful eloquence,  
 Or be less read than deep Cascellius ;  
 Yet this indifferent lawyer is esteem'd :  
 But no authority of gods or men  
 Allows of any mean in poesy.  
 As an ill concert, or a coarse perfume,  
 Disgrace the delicacy of a feast,  
 And might with more discretion have been spar'd ;  
 So poesy, whose end is to delight,  
 Admits of no degrees ; but must be still  
 Sublimely good, or despicably ill.

\* Art. Poët. ver. 366—379.

O major juvenum, quamvis et voce paternâ  
 Fingeris ad rectum, et per te sapis ; hoc tibi dictum  
 Tolle memor : certis medium et tolerabile rebus  
 Rectè concedi : consultus juris et actor  
 Causarum mediocris abest virtute diserti  
 Messalæ, nec scit quantum Cascellius Aulus ;  
 Sed tamen in pretio est : mediocribus esse poëtis  
 Non homines, non dî, non concessere columnæ.  
 Ut gratas inter mensas symphonia discors,  
 Et crassum unguentum, et Sardo cum melle papaver,  
 Offendunt, poterat duci quia cœna sine istis ;  
 Sic animis natum inventumque poemâ juvandis,  
 Si paullùm summo decessit, vergit ad imum.



Besides, one principal source of the gratification, that springs from poetry, is undoubtedly derived from a display of skill in the artist, and a conception of difficulty, on the part of the reader, surmounted by dexterity of execution: but what an abatement must be occasioned of course to this pleasure, when words are either adopted for the mere convenience of the rhyme, as they casually present themselves, independent of their fitness; or are admitted to a rhyming station, without a scrupulous regard to proximity of sound: and we are thus feelingly advertised at every step of the laziness and inattention of the translator?

In many instances that the reader may not be precipitate in his censures, I have omitted the mention of exceptionable rhymes, when the same or similar had been noticed before, from a desire of all possible brevity in such minute and uninteresting criticism, mingled with a consideration for his time, and a respect for his sagacity. Words of the same form, but different in pronunciation, such as *love, move, Jove; live, thrive*, &c. with a great variety of other terminations, must be conceded to the poet without demur, in my judgment; or we shall impose a task upon him transcending all the versatility of human wit, and shall unavoidably produce a too frequent recurrence of the only rhyming words, that would be left for occupation. There are some others also, still more unlike, as *even, given, Heaven*, &c. of such perpetual necessity and convenience, so commodious in particular to the ends of verses, and accommodated by such a scarcity of parallels; so prevalent moreover in our most accepted writers; as to claim an unreserved indulgence from the rigorous sentence of proscription.

Thus, under the impression of reverential diffidence, bordering on religious awe, but sustained by a conviction of disinterested purpose, and protected, I trust, by my enthusiastic admiration of the mighty genius and exquisite accomplishments of our translator, have I presumed, but with a trem-

bling hand of conscious imbecility, to delineate a few dark spots, scarcely visible but to the telescopic eye of searching Criticism, on this luminary of transcendent brightness; from whose fountain the urns of all future adventurers in English verse will be replenished. I commend, however, my well-intentioned efforts to the candid acceptance of the reader, and proceed to the conclusion of my remarks.

We should suppose of course, that any translator, and much more an original genius, naturally impatient of such restraint, would gradually sink under the fatigues of so long a work. This was undoubtedly the case with Pope, even by his own confession, in his Farewell to London:

Why should I stay? Both parties rage:

My vixen mistress squalls:

The wits in envious feuds engage,

*And Homer (damn him!) calls.*

Accordingly, if I mistake not, an attentive reader will discover more frequent instances of carelessness, and a languor creeping upon him with accelerated progress, towards the conclusion of the longer books even in the Iliad: but these symptoms become more numerous and strong throughout the Odyssey; discoverable by frequent and considerable abridgements of his author, and by inferior correctness. Indeed, there is reason to suppose, that the second undertaking partook much less of a spontaneous effort than the former: and was prompted, in a great measure perhaps, by the cold incentive of pecuniary profit; and in part from a desire of exhibiting a complete performance to the public.

In my opinion, if Time and Inclination had conspired to that allotment, Dryden's genius and mode of versification were better suited to a version of Homer than of Virgil: as Pope was eminently calculated in every point of view for a noble exhibition of the Roman majesty in an English dress. It must be owned, however, that poetry has sustained no great loss by the discontinuance of Dryden's attempt on



Homer with the conclusion of the first Iliad. The extreme carelessness of that extraordinary genius, and his extravagant licentiousness in every species of deviation, have rendered that specimen of his powers rather a disparagement to the reputation of so glorious a poet, than a motive of regret to his readers; though Pope, indeed, from a sincere veneration for the vast endowments of his master, bordering in this instance, I think, on puerile extravagance and affected candour, has declared his disinclination to have attempted Homer after Dryden, had he prosecuted his undertaking. On the supposition of a proportionate diligence in Dryden, the freedom and simplicity of his diction, his exuberant and flowing verse, distinguished by an unaffected facility, that accommodated the most familiar passages, and a stateliness that would have kept pace with the majesty of the most sublime, seconded by an unexampled versatility of phrase and exuberance of composition, characterise him as the congenial translator of the Grecian bard: as Pope, from a most delicate sensibility of taste, a judgment unimpeachably accurate and refined, a texture of versification mellifluous, sonorous and majestic; with every embellishment of poetical phraseology, at once magnificent and chaste; seemed preeminently qualified to produce a transcript of Virgil, which the fondest admirer of antiquity would not have presumed to disparage in competition with the great original. Yet, in the present state of things, we could not consent to exchange our English Iliad for an *Æneid*, even of the same artificer: and much less for such a Homer as he would have left us, could Dryden's Virgil be spared to our country; a work which contributed so much to the improvement of Pope, as an excellent model, as a treasury of poetic beauties, and as an incentive of emulation: a work which made him indeed in a great measure what he was. The stream of Pope's poetry, clear, and full, and strong, may be justly compared to the grandeur and exube-

rance of the Nile; but it's fountains, like those of the river of Ægypt, are not unknown.

The characters of the poetical translators of Homer's poems who preceded Pope may be stated in few words: and have been seen in some measure fairly and fully drawn by the hand of Pope himself.

Chapman was not destitute of genius. His expression is copious, diversified and vigorous; his execution spirited, and occasionally rising into sublimity. The effect, however, of his translation is much weakened by paraphrastical prolixity and unauthorised interpolations to a degree of frivolous puerility and wild licentiousness. His phrases and epithets are sometimes eminently happy: of which, and of his rhymes, our poet will be shewn to have availed himself on many occasions with little ceremony, and no scrupulous acknowledgment of obligation. Such redundancy of sentiment and bold luxuriance of language afforded many opportunities of selecting flowers to so careful a scrutinizer in the wilds of Poetry, as the bee of Twickenham.

Hobbes is stiff, jejune, and crabbed; devoid of ornament, and destitute of taste; he cramps, huddles, mutilates, and burlesques his author: he is coarse, and vulgar, and flat beyond the insipidity of verbal prose.

Homer, in the hands of the rigid philosopher of Malmesbury, undergoes the harsh discipline of the dwarfs compressed in boxes by the ancients\*. The unmerciful strictures of the operator not only prevent an appearance of the body in its native form and just proportions, but crush it to deformity. A translator like this, in all respects illaudable, could have but slender charms for the hilarity and elegance of a teeming fancy and an improved taste: and accordingly the obligations of Pope to Hobbes are few and trivial.

The chief merit of Ogilby consists in a commendable and

\* See Longinus de Sub. sect. ult.



uniform fidelity to the sense of his author. As a poet, his pretensions to praise of any kind can scarcely be supported: he has neither animation of thought, accuracy of taste, sensibility of feeling, nor ornament of diction. Yet our translator will be found to have consulted his version with unremitting steadiness, and to have profited by his rhymes in more instances than would be previously supposed. The similar structure of his versification may be reasonably deemed a principal cause of such particular attention from Pope, who reflects upon this translator, by condescending to borrow from him, an honour, which his own solitary efforts would never have procured; and has thus secured, perhaps, the future existence of a version, just sinking into the gulph of perpetual oblivion.

Pretty! in amber to observe the forms  
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!  
The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,  
But wonder how the devil they got there.

As I have occasionally quoted, for the entertainment of the reader, and to relieve the dryness of verbal criticism, several translators, subsequent to Pope, it may be expected that I should pass a short judgment upon them also.

In the year 1740 H. Travers published by subscription a miscellaneous collection of poetry: among which are translations of the three first Iliads, and from the sixth the story of Bellerophon. The whole of this collection evinces a man of genuine poetic talents; and the translations just mentioned are executed with considerable ability. But he treads closely in the steps of Pope: and though he frequently improves on his predecessor, the general effect of his version is cold and feeble in comparison, and sufficiently shews at every step the extent of his obligations to the model which lay before him. He too, though a man of learning, has supinely adopted some of his master's misrepresentations of their author.

The merits of Mr. Cowper it is much more difficult to

estimate, with a benevolent regard at the same time to the sacred feelings of an amiable writer, under a reverence inspired by a man of fine genius, and with justice to the public by a religiously scrupulous adherence to sincerity. I speak with unwilling emphasis, but unaffected hesitation, when I assert, if my own ears are not absolutely unattuned to the mellifluous cadence of poetic numbers, the structure of Mr. Cowper's verse is harsh, broken, and inharmonious, to a degree inconceivable in a writer of so much original and intrinsic excellence. His fidelity to his author is, however, entitled to unreserved praise, and proclaims the accuracy and intelligence of a critical proficient in his language. The true sense of Homer and the character of his phraseology may be seen in Mr. Cowper's version to more advantage beyond all comparison, than in any other translation whatsoever within the compass of my knowledge. His epithets are frequently combined after the Greek manner, which our language most happily admits, with singular dexterity and complete success: his diction is grand, copious, energetic, and diversified; full fraught with every embellishment of poetic phraseology: his turns of expression are on many occasions hit off with most ingenious felicity; and there are specimens of native simplicity also in his performance, that place him at least on a level with his author, and vindicate his title in this respect to a superiority over all his predecessors in this most arduous and painful enterprise. Boswell, in his *Life of Johnson*, has spoken of Mr. Cowper's translation with an unfeeling petulance, with an insolent dogmatism, perfectly congenial to that rash and audacious censor.\*

In conclusion, I must solicit the indulgence of the reader,

\* This sentence would have been accompanied by some additional chastisement: but the object of it is beyond the reach of human reformation:

From zeal or malice now no more to dread;  
And English vengeance wars not with the dead.



whilst I detain his attention by a few words concerning myself more immediately, and, in particular, on my conduct as the editor of these noble poems. I have some explanations to give, many apologies to make, and much candour to implore, or ever I can expect a favourable acceptance of my labours.

It did not appear to fall within my province, as the publisher of an English version, to digress into criticisms, verbal or sentimental, on Homer himself; into disquisitions on points of history and geography, and the economical distribution of his poem: animadversions of this kind, therefore, will be sparingly discovered, and only on occasions when they were immediately demanded, from their connection with the translation of our poet. What I conceived to have become my principal duty, under this engagement, was, 1. To point out the material deviations of the translator from the sense of his original: 2. To open the sources of these deviations, and, at the same time exhibit the versions of those predecessors, by which he had essentially modelled his own: and 3. lastly, To pass a free censure, to the best of my judgment, on the defects of his versification, that I might prevent as far as possible the pernicious effects of weighty authority from so distinguished an example; and might thus contribute, as far as the mediocrity of my talents and taste would enable me, to the melioration of English poetry.

1. A deficiency of classical knowledge could not fail of detection during the progress of so long a work as the translation of Homer's *Iliad*, though he is the most simple and perspicuous of writers: and Pope's aberrations from the sense of his author are much too oblique and frequent to be explained on any other conceivable hypothesis, without a gross impeachment of his character as a literary profligate: otherwise, it were a most fraudulent imposture on the public, and an immoral violation of this reasonable

confidence, that a man, who profited so abundantly by his undertaking,\* should spare no labour within the compass of his abilities in a conscientious discharge of his engagement. Had he been adequately versed, therefore, in the language of his author, such a neglect, as experiment will prove upon him, would demonstrate an indifference to his duty, or a lazy precipitation in the completion of his task, for which no apology can be offered. And it seemed of some moment, as a literary curiosity at least, that some examiner, not incompetent to such an office, should submit to the invidious drudgery of pointing out to the English reader in what respects this sublime and elegant production disagreed with it's great original.

2. It seemed also not unlikely to be productive of some amusement to the lovers of poetry, and a help to the formation of a true estimate of our poet's merit in this work, to trace his steps through the paths of his predecessors, as far as they were discoverable now. Perhaps, however, the deduction from his praise of invention on this score may be more than counterbalanced by the result of comparison in favour of his taste: by contemplating the rich tissue of poetical embellishment, in which he has so gorgeously enrobed the rags and nakedness of his predecessors. They at least, as I before insinuated, are indebted to him for innumerable specimens of their straw preserved in the pellucid amber of his genius; for abundant conversions of their disregarded and forgotten rubbish by his magic touch into the purest gold.

\* But thanks to Homer since I live and thrive,  
Indebted to no prince or peer alive,

are his own words of himself and his translation; uttered, alas! with little truth and less modesty. The list of his subscribers is emblazoned with royalty and nobility; and the man, who condescends to solicit the public for subscriptions, let his genius and accomplishments be as eminent as they please, is *indebted* to the benefaction of every contributor.



THE  
FIRST BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.





## THE ARGUMENT.

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### THE CONTENTION OF ACHILLES AND AGAMEMNON.

*IN the war of Troy, the Greeks having sacked some of the neighbouring towns, and taken from thence two beautiful captives, Chryseïs and Briseïs, allotted the first to Agamemnon, and the last to Achilles. Chryses, the father of Chryseïs, and priest of Apollo, comes to the Grecian camp to ransom her; with which the action of the poem opens, in the tenth year of the siege. The priest being refused and insolently dismissed by Agamemnon, intreats for vengeance from his God, who inflicts a pestilence on the Greeks. Achilles calls a council, and encourages Calcas to declare the cause of it, who attributes it to the refusal of Chryseïs. The king, being obliged to send back his captive, enters into a furious contest with Achilles, which Nestor pacifies; however, as he had the absolute command of the army, he seizes on Briseïs in revenge. Achilles in discontent withdraws himself and his forces from the rest of the Greeks; and complaining to Thetis, she supplicates Jupiter to render them sensible of the wrong done to her son, by giving victory to the Trojans. Jupiter granting her suit incenses Juno, between whom the debate runs high, till they are reconciled by the address of Vulcan.*

*The time of two and twenty days is taken up in this book; nine during the plague, one in the council and quarrel of the Princes, and twelve for Jupiter's stay with the Æthiopians, at whose return Thetis prefers her petition. The scene lies in the Grecian camp, then changes to Chrysa, and lastly to Olympus.*

## NOTE PRELIMINARY.

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IT is something strange that of all the commentators upon Homer, there is hardly one whose principal design is to illustrate the poetical beauties of the author. They are voluminous in explaining those sciences which he made but subservient to his poetry, and sparing only upon that art which constitutes his character. This has been occasioned by the ostentation of men who had more reading than taste, and were fonder of showing their variety of learning in all kinds, than their single understanding in poetry. Hence it comes to pass that their remarks are rather philosophical, historical, geographical, allegorical, or in short any thing rather than critical and poetical. Even the grammarians, though their whole business and use be only to render the words of an author intelligible, are strangely touched with the pride of doing something more than they ought. The grand ambition of one sort of scholars is to increase the number of *various lections*; which they have done to such a degree of obscure diligence, that (as Sir H. Savil observed) we now begin to value the first edition of books as most correct, because they have been the least corrected. The prevailing passion of others is to discover *new meanings* in the author, whom they will cause to appear mysterious purely for the vanity of being thought to unravel him. These account it a disgrace to be of the opinion of those that preceded them; and it is generally the fate of such people who will never say what was said before, to say what will never be said after them. If they can but find a word, that has once been strained by some dark writer, to signify any thing different from its usual acceptation, it is frequent with them to apply it constantly to that uncommon meaning, whenever they meet it in a clear writer: for reading is so much dearer to them than sense, that they will discard it at any time to make way for a criticism. In other places, where they cannot contest the truth of the common interpretation, they get themselves room for dissertation by imaginary *amphibologies*, which they will have to be designed by the author. This disposition of finding out different significations in one thing may be the effect of either too much, or too little wit; for men of a right understanding generally see at once all that an author can reasonably mean, but others are apt to fancy two meanings for want of knowing one. Not to add, that there



is a vast deal of difference between the learning of a critick, and the puzzling of a grammarian.

It is no easy task to make something out of a hundred pedants that is not pedantical; yet this he must do, who would give a tolerable abstract of the former expositors of Homer. The commentaries of Eustathius are indeed an immense treasury of the Greek learning; but as he seems to have amassed the substance of whatever others had written upon the author, so he is not free from some of the foregoing censures. There are those who have said that a judicious abstract of him alone might furnish out sufficient illustrations upon Homer. It was resolved to take the trouble of reading through that voluminous work; and the reader may be assured those remarks that any way concern the poetry, or art of the poet, are much fewer than is imagined. The greater part of these is already plundered by succeeding commentators, who have very little but what they owe to him: and I am obliged to say even of Madam Dacier, that she is either more beholden to him than she has confessed, or has read him less than she is willing to own. She has made a farther attempt than her predecessors to discover the beauties of the poet; though we have often only her general praises and exclamations, instead of reasons. But her remarks all together are the most judicious collection extant of the scattered observations of the ancients and moderns, as her preface is excellent, and her translation equally careful and elegant.

The chief design of the following notes is to comment upon Homer as a poet; whatever in them is extracted from others is constantly owned; the remarks of the ancients are generally set at length, and the places cited; all those of Eustathius are collected which fall under this scheme; many which were not acknowledged by other commentators are restored to the true owner; and the same justice is shown to those who refused it to others.

The plan of this poem is formed upon anger and its ill effects; the plan of Virgil's upon pious resignation and its rewards; and thus every passion or virtue may be the foundation of the scheme of an epic poem. This distinction between two authors who have been so successful, seemed necessary to be taken notice of, that they who would imitate either may not stumble at the very entrance, or so curb their imaginations, as to deprive us of noble morals told in a new variety of accidents. Imitation does not hinder invention: we may observe the rules of nature, and write in the spirit

NOTE PRELIMINARY.

of those who have best hit upon them ; without taking the same track, beginning in the same manner, and following the main of their story almost step by step ; as most of the modern writers of epic poetry have done after one of these great poets.

P.



THE  
FIRST BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

---

ACHILLES' wrath, to Greece the direful spring  
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly Goddess, sing !  
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign  
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain ;  
Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore, 5  
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore :

NOTES.

Ver. 3.] This is an imitation of Dacier.—“ *Cette colere*  
“ *pernicieuse,—qui precipita dans le sombre royaume de Pluton,*  
“ *les ames généreuses de tant de héros.*” W.

Ver. 5.] He had once written,  
——on the *hostile* shore :

Which was better: as the circumstance of being unburied in an  
*enemy's* country would be an additional cause of sorrow to a hea-  
then in those days.

I shall give now, as on many future occasions, a literal copy of  
the original in equal compass ; not as a proper and complete version  
by any means, but as the only method of notifying to the English  
reader the deviations, the omissions, the amplifications, the addi-  
tions, and the embellishments of our poet:

And make them spoils of every dog and fowl :

Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,  
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of  
Jove !

where the general word *every* is very emphatical, and is designed to point out their utterly abandoned and defenceless state, so as to be secure from no animals, however small, and feeble, and irresolute.

In this exordium, and in similar passages of narrative and simple description, a version like Pope's infinitely exceeds, in my opinion, *any* blank translation that could be given. *Rhyme* is such a decoration, as a poetical subject in this case seems absolutely to require.

W.

Ver. 8. *Will of Jove.*] Plutarch in his treatise of reading poets, interprets Διὸς in this place to signify *Fate*, not imagining it consistent with the goodness of the supreme being, or Jupiter, to contrive or practice any evil against men. Eustathius makes [*Will*] here to refer to the promise which Jupiter gave to Thetis, that he would honour her son by siding with Troy, while he should be absent. But to reconcile these two opinions, perhaps the meaning may be, that when *Fate* had decreed the destruction of Troy, Jupiter having the power of incidents to bring it to pass, fulfilled that decree by providing means for it. So that the words may thus specify the time of action from the beginning of the poem, in which those incidents worked, till the promise to Thetis was fulfilled, and the destruction of Troy ascertained to the Greeks by the death of Hector. However it is certain that this poet was not an absolute fatalist, but still supposed the power of Jove superior: for in the sixteenth Iliad, we see him designing to save Sarpedon, though the fates had decreed his death, if Juno had not interposed. Neither does he exclude free-will in men; for as he attributes the destruction of the heroes to the will of Jove in the beginning of the Iliad, so he attributes the destruction of Ulysses's friends to their *own folly* in the beginning of the Odysses.

P.

The true interpretation of the passage in question is not obvious. I understand the poet as follows: "*But the will of Jove was all this time accomplishing.* He had decreed the destruction of Troy, which was brought forwards by this very mean, the quarrel between the chiefs; a circumstance that appeared very likely to impede, and even frustrate, the grand event. For the resentment, occasioned by the death of Patroclus, was fatal to Hector, and in him to Troy."

W.



Declare O Muse ! in what ill-fated hour  
 Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended power? 10  
 Latona's son a dire contagion spread,  
 And heaped the camp with mountains of the  
 dead ;

The king of men his reverend priest defied,  
 And for the king's offence the people died.

For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain 15  
 His captive daughter from the victor's chain.  
 Suppliant the venerable father stands,  
 Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands :  
 By these he begs ; and lowly bending down,  
 Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown. 20  
 He sued to all, but chief implored for grace  
 The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race.

Ye kings and warriors ! may your vows be  
 crown'd,  
 And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.  
 May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er, 25  
 Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.  
 But oh ! relieve a wretched parent's pain,  
 And give Chryseïs to these arms again ;

Ver. 14.] An edifying reflexion, engrafted on the original, and derived from Horace :

————delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi :

And subjects rue the madness of their kings. W.

Ver. 20. *The sceptre and the laurel crown.*] There is something exceedingly venerable in this appearance of the priest. He comes with the ensigns of the God he belonged to ; the laurel crown, now carried in his hand, to show he was a suppliant ; and a golden sceptre, which the ancients gave in particular to Apollo, as they did a silver one to the moon, and other sorts to the planets.—  
*Eustathius.* P.

If mercy fail, yet let my presence move,  
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove. 30

The Greeks in shouts their joint assent declare,  
The priest to reverence, and release the fair.  
Not so Atrides : He, with kingly pride,  
Repuls'd the sacred Sire, and thus replied :

Hence on thy life, and fly these hostile plains, 35  
Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains :  
Hence, with thy laurel crown and golden rod,  
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy God.  
Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain ;  
And prayers, and tears, and bribes shall plead in  
vain ; 40

Ver. 30.] Our poet here, and above in v. 18, omits an image of his original, which he might easily have preserved by writing thus :

And dread *far-shooting* Phœbus, son of Jove. W.

Ver. 31.] Ogilby and Chapinan alone, of all the rhyming translators, are true to their author. \* The former is not contemptible :

Straight all the Greeks, as one, their voices give,  
The priest to honour, and his gifts receive. W.

Ver. 35.] He took from Dryden this awkward phrase, *hence on thy life* ; and has very inadequately represented his original, when Chapman and Ogilby had already done more justice to their author. The version of the latter is not to be despised :

Be sure, old dotard, thee I never meet  
Here lingering, or revisiting our fleet.

Homer says these *ships*, not these plains. The remainder of this speech is nobly poetical in our translator : but he has followed Dryden in misrepresenting the original in verse 44. Mr. Cowper thus exhibits the complete sense ; but, for once, without force, elegance, or animation :

———From her native country far,  
In Argos, in my palace, she shall ply  
The loom, and shall be partner of my bed. W.



Till time shall rifle every youthful grace,  
And age dismiss her from my cold embrace.  
In daily labours of the loom employ'd,  
Or doom'd to deck the bed she once enjoy'd.  
Hence then ! to Argos shall the maid retire, 45  
Far from her native soil, and weeping sire.

The trembling priest along the shore return'd,  
And in the anguish of a father mourn'd.  
Disconsolate, not daring to complain,  
Silent he wander'd by the sounding main : 50  
Till, safe at distance, to his God he prays,  
The God who darts around the world his rays.

O Smintheus ! sprung from fair Latona's line,  
Thou guardian power of Cilla the divine,  
Thou source of light ! whom Tenedos adores, 55  
And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's shores :  
If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,  
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain,  
God of the silver bow ! thy shafts employ,  
Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy. 60

Thus Chryses pray'd : The favouring power attends,  
And from Olympus' lofty tops descends.  
Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound ;  
Fierce as he mov'd, his silver shafts resound.

Ver. 51.] This ignoble extraneous thought is from Dryden :

——secure at length he stood.

Or it might be suggested, indeed, by Chapman's version :

——the priest, trod off with haste and feare :

And, walking silent, till he *felt, farre off his enemies care*. W.

Ver. 62.] He might easily have kept closer to his original :

And from Olympus' tops in *wrath* descends.

Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread, 65  
 And gloomy darkness roll'd about his head.  
 The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,  
 And hissing fly the feather'd fates below.  
 On mules and dogs the' infection first began ;  
 And last, the vengeful arrows fix'd in man. 70

Ver. 67. *He twang'd his deadly bow.*] In the tenth year of the siege of Troy, a plague happened in the Grecian camp, occasioned perhaps by immoderate heats and gross exhalations. At the introduction of this accident Homer begins his poem, and takes occasion from it to open the scene of action with a most beautiful allegory. He supposes that such afflictions are sent from heaven for the punishment of our evil actions; and because the sun was a principal instrument of it, he says it was sent to punish Agamemnon for despising that God, and injuring his priest. *Eustathius.* P.

Ver. 69. *Mules and dogs.*] Hippocrates observes two things of plagues; that their cause is in the air, and that different animals are differently touched by them, according to their nature or nourishment. This philosophy Spondanus refers to the plague here mentioned. First, the cause is in the air, by reason of the darts or beams of Apollo. Secondly, the mules and dogs are said to die sooner than the men; partly because they have by nature a quickness of smell, which makes the infection sooner perceivable: and partly by the nourishment they take, their feeding on the earth with prone heads making the exhalation more easy to be sucked in with it. Thus has Hippocrates, so long after Homer writ, subscribed to his knowledge in the rise and progress of this distemper. There have been some who have referred this passage to a religious sense, making the death of the mules and dogs before the men to point out a kind of method of providence in punishing, whereby it sends some previous afflictions to warn mankind, so as to make them shun the greater evils by repentance. This Monsieur Dacier, in his notes on Aristotle's art of poetry, calls a remark perfectly fine and agreeable to God's method of sending plagues on the Ægyptians, where first horses, asses, &c. were smitten, and afterwards the men themselves.

Heraclides Ponticus, in his most elegant treatise on the *Allegories of Homer*, remarks, that the most accurate observations of physicians and philosophers, unite in testifying the commencement



For nine long nights, thro' all the dusky air  
 The pyres thick-flaming shot a dismal glare.  
 But ere the tenth revolving day was run,  
 Inspir'd by Juno, Thetis' God-like son  
 Conven'd to council all the Grecian train ; 75  
 For much the goddess mourn'd her heroes slain.

The' assembly seated, rising o'er the rest,  
 Achilles thus the king of men address :

Why leave we not the fatal Trojan shore,  
 And measure back the seas we crost before ? 80  
 The plague destroying whom the sword would  
 spare,

'Tis time to save the few remains of war.  
 But let some prophet, or some sacred sage,  
 Explore the cause of great Apollo's rage ;  
 Or learn the wasteful vengeance to remove 85  
 By mystic dreams, for dreams descend from Jove.

of *pestilential* disorders to be exhibited in the havoc of *four-footed animals*. P.

Ver. 86. *By mystic dreams.*] It does not seem that by the word *ὄνειρόπολος* an interpreter of dreams is meant, for we have no hint of any preceding dream which wants to be interpreted. We may therefore more probably refer it to such who used (after performing proper rites) to lie down at some sacred place and expect a dream from the Gods upon any particular subject which they desired. That this was a practice among them, appears from the Temples of Amphiaraus in Bœotia and Podalirius in Apulia, where the inquirer was obliged to sleep at the altar upon the skin of the beast he had sacrificed, in order to obtain an answer. It is in this manner that Latinus in Virgil's seventh book goes to dream in the temple of Faunus, where we have a particular description of the whole custom. Strabo, lib. xvi. has spoken concerning the temple of Jerusalem as a place of this nature ; “ where (says he) the people either dreamed for themselves, or procured some “ good dreamer to do it.” By which it should seem he had read

If broken vows this heavy curse have laid,  
 Let altars smoke, and hecatombs be paid.  
 So Heaven aton'd shall dying Greece restore,  
 And Phœbus dart his burning shafts no more. 90

He said, and sat : when Chalcas thus replied :  
 Chalcas the wise, the Grecian priest and guide,  
 That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view  
 The past, the present, and the future knew :  
 Uprising slow, the venerable sage 95  
 Thus spoke the prudence and the fears of age.

Beloved of Jove, Achilles ! wouldst thou know  
 Why angry Phœbus bends his fatal bow ?

something concerning the visions of their prophets, as that which Samuel had when he was ordered to sleep a third time before the ark, and upon doing so had an account of the destruction of Eli's house ; or that which happened to Solomon, after having sacrificed before the ark at Gibeon. The same author has also mentioned the temple of Serapis in his seventeenth book, as a place for receiving oracles by dreams. P.

Ver. 96.] He should have written :

“ Thus *spake* the prudence : ”

as in numberless other instances. And the original says merely, as Mr. Cowper renders :

He, prudent, them admonishing replied.

W.

Ver. 97. *Beloved of Jove, Achilles!*] These appellations of praise and honour, with which the heroes in Homer so frequently salute each other, were agreeable to the style of the ancient times, as appears from several of the like nature in the scripture. Milton has not been wanting to give his poem this cast of antiquity, throughout which our first parents almost always accost each other with some title, that expresses a respect to the dignity of human nature,

Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve——

Adam, Earth's hallow'd mould of God inspir'd.——

Offspring of heaven and earth, and all earth's Lord, &c.

Our translator is unhappy in this speech of Chalcas, which partly perverts, and partly suppresses, the original. Mr. Travers is more



First give thy faith, and plight a prince's word  
Of sure protection, by thy power and sword. 100  
For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,  
And truths, invidious to the great, reveal.  
Bold is the task, when subjects grown too wise,  
Instruct a monarch where his error lies ;  
For tho' we deem the short-liv'd fury past, 105  
'Tis sure, the mighty will revenge at last.

To whom Pelides. From thy inmost soul  
Speak what thou know'st, and speak without con-  
troul.

Even by that God I swear, who rules the day,  
To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey, 110  
And whose blest oracles thy lips declare,  
Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,  
No daring Greek of all the numerous band,  
Against his priest shall lift an impious hand :  
Not ev'n the chief by whom our hosts are led, 115  
The king of kings, shall touch that sacred head.

Encourag'd thus, the blameless man replies ;  
Nor vows unpaid, nor slighted sacrifice,  
But he, our chief, provok'd the raging pest,  
Apollo's vengeance for his injur'd priest. 120  
Nor will the God's awaken'd fury cease,  
But plagues shall spread, and funeral fires increase,

successful in one part ; though even he has not shewn his skill in  
preserving the indirect dexterity of Homer.

I guess my speech the monarch's rage will bring ;  
And how shall subjects trust an angry king ?  
Tho' he, perhaps, no blaze of passion shews,  
Fierce in his mind the dark resentment glows.

W.

Till the great king, without a ransom paid,  
 To her own Chrysa send the black-ey'd maid.  
 Perhaps, with added sacrifice and prayer, 125  
 The priest may pardon, and the God may spare.

The prophet spoke ; when with a gloomy frown  
 The monarch started from his shining throne ;  
 Black choler fill'd his breast that boil'd with ire,  
 And from his eye-balls flash'd the living fire. 130  
 Augur accurst ! denouncing mischief still,  
 Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill !  
 Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,  
 And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king ?  
 For this are Phoebus' oracles explor'd, 135  
 To teach the Greeks to murmur at their Lord ?  
 For this with falsehoods is my honour stain'd,  
 Is Heaven offended, and a priest profan'd ;  
 Because my prize, my beauteous maid I hold,  
 And heavenly charms prefer to proffer'd gold ? 140  
 A maid, unmatched in manners as in face,  
 Skill'd in each art, and crown'd with every grace.

Ver. 128.] Homer says only, *he rose up* ;  
 but Dryden :

*Upstarting from his throne*, the king of men. W.

Ver. 131. *Augur accurst !*] This expression is not merely thrown out by chance, but proves what Chalcas said of the King when he asked protection, " That he harboured anger in his heart." For it aims at the prediction Chalcas had given at Aulis nine years before, for the sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia. *Spondanus*. P.

Ver. 137.] His original runs literally thus :

That hence the God far-darting sends these woes,  
 Because the splendid ransom I refused  
 Of your Chryseis. W.



Not half so dear were Clytemnestra's charms,  
When first her blooming beauties blest my arms.  
Yet if the Gods demand her, let her sail;      145  
Our cares are only for the public weal:  
Let me be deem'd the hateful cause of all,  
And suffer, rather than my people fall.  
The prize, the beauteous prize, I will resign,  
So dearly valued, and so justly mine.      150  
But since for common good I yield the fair,  
My private loss let grateful Greece repair;  
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,  
That he alone has fought and bled in vain.  
Insatiate king ! (Achilles thus replies)      155  
Fond of the power, but fonder of the prize !

Ver. 155. *Insatiate king.*] Here, when this passion of anger grows loud, it seems proper to prepare the reader, and prevent his mistake in the character of Achilles, which might shock him in several particulars following. We should know that the poet rather studied nature than perfection, in the laying down his characters. He resolved to sing the consequences of anger; he considered what virtues and vices would conduce most to bring his moral out of the fable; and artfully disposed them in his chief persons after the manner in which we generally find them; making the fault which most peculiarly attends any good quality to reside with it. Thus he has placed pride with magnanimity in Agamemnon, and craft with prudence in Ulysses. And thus we must take his Achilles, not as a mere heroick dispassionate character, but as compounded of courage and anger; one who finds himself almost invincible, and assumes an uncontrouled carriage upon the self-consciousness of his worth; whose high strain of honour will not suffer him to betray his friends, or fight against them, even when he thinks they have affronted him; but whose inexorable resentment will not let him hearken to any terms of accommodation.—These are the lights and shades of his character, which Homer has heightened and darkened in extremes; because on the one side valour is the darling quality of epic poetry; and on the other, anger the particular subject of this poem. When characters thus

Would'st thou the Greeks their lawful prey should  
yield,

The due reward of many a well-fought field?

The spoils of cities razed, and warriors slain,

We share with justice, as with toil we gain: 160

But to resume whatever thy avarice craves,

(That trick of tyrants) may be borne by slaves.

Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,

The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss requite,

Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conquering powers 165

Shall humble to the dust her lofty towers.

Then thus the king. Shall I my prize resign

With tame content, and thou possessest of thine?

Great as thou art, and like a God in fight,

Think not to rob me of a soldier's right. 170

mixed are well conducted, though they be not morally beautiful quite through, they conduce more to the end, and are still poetically perfect.

Plutarch takes occasion from the observation of this conduct in Homer, to applaud his just imitation of nature and truth, in representing virtues and vices intermixed in his Heroes; contrary to the paradoxes and strange positions of the Stoicks, who held that no vice could consist with virtue, nor the least virtue with vice. *Plut. de aud. poetis.* P.

Ogilby is unpoetical, but close to his author:

To this Æacides; Oh! thou the most

Renown'd, and yet the greediest of the host. W.

Ver. 161.] This is wide of the original, to which most of the other translators have adhered. Mr. Travers thus:

Can we resume each private warrior's right,

And part anew the vast rewards of fight? W.

Ver. 163.] There is nothing of this in his original. The following correction would make the translation faithful:

*Thou then indulge a tender parent's prayer:*

The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss repair. W.

Ver. 169. *Great as thou art, and like a God in fight.*] The



At thy demand shall I restore the maid ?  
 First let the just equivalent be paid ;  
 Such as a king might ask ; and let it be  
 A treasure worthy her, and worthy me.  
 Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim, 175  
 This hand shall seize some other captive dame.  
 The mighty Ajax shall his prize resign,  
 Ulysses' spoils, or even thy own be mine.  
 The man who suffers, loudly may complain ;  
 And rage he may, but he shall rage in vain. 180  
 But this when time requires—It now remains  
 We launch a bark to plow the watery plains,

words in the original are θεοεικέλ' Ἀχιλλεύ. Ulysses is soon after called Δῖος, and others in other places. The phrase of *divine* or *god-like* is not used by the poet to signify perfection in men, but applied to considerable persons upon account of some particular qualification or advantage, which they were possessed of far above the common standard of mankind. Thus it is ascribed to Achilles on account of his great valour, to Ulysses for his pre-eminence in wisdom ; even to Paris for his exceeding beauty, and to Clytemnestra for several fair endowments. P.

Ver. 172. *First let the just equivalent.*] The reasoning in point of right between Achilles and Agamemnon seems to be this.—Achilles pleads that Agamemnon could not seize upon any other man's captive, without a new distribution, it being an invasion of private property. On the other hand, as Agamemnon's power was limited, how came it that all the Grecian captains would submit to an illegal and arbitrary action ? I think the legal pretence for his seizing Briseïs must have been founded upon that law, whereby the commander in chief had the power of taking what part of the prey he pleased for his own use : and he being obliged to restore what he had taken, it seemed but just that he should have a second choice. P.

Ver. 175.] This thought, not in the original, he owed to Dryden :

Else I, assure thy soul, *by sovereign right*,  
 Will seize thy captive in thy own despight.

W.

And waft the sacrifice to Chrysa's shores,  
 With chosen pilots, and with labouring oars.  
 Soon shall the fair the sable ship ascend, 185  
 And some deputed prince the charge attend;  
 This Creta's king, or Ajax shall fulfil,  
 Or wise Ulysses see performed our will;  
 Or, if our royal pleasure shall ordain,  
 Achilles' self conduct her o'er the main; 190  
 Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,  
 The God propitiate, and the pest assuage.

At this, Pelides, frowning stern, replied :  
 O tyrant, arm'd with insolence and pride !  
 Inglorious slave to interest, ever join'd 195  
 With fraud, unworthy of a royal mind !  
 What generous Greek, obedient to thy word,  
 Shall form an ambush, or shall lift the sword ?  
 What cause have I to war at thy decree ?  
 The distant Trojans never injured me : 200  
 To Phthia's realms no hostile troops they led,  
 Safe in her vales my warlike coursers fed ;  
 Far hence removed, the hoarse-resounding main,  
 And walls of rocks, secure my native reign,

Ver. 189.] He was misled by Dryden, into this perversion of the original, which is neatly and fully expressed by Mr. Travers:

Then to the deck the fair Chryseis bring,  
 The charge of Ajax, or of Creta's king ;  
 Be grave Ulysses, or be thou, the guide,  
 Fierce as thou art, unrivall'd in thy pride :  
 Aton'd by thee let Heaven propitious grow,  
 And the fell shaft of vengeance cease to glow.

Ver. 196.] This is not in the original ; *one* line of which is feebly expanded by the translator into *three*. Thus Homer ;

O ! clothed in impudence ! of greedy soul ! W.



Whose fruitful soil luxuriant harvests grace, 205  
 Rich in her fruits, and in her martial race.  
 Hither we sail'd, a voluntary throng,  
 To' avenge a private, not a publick wrong :  
 What else to Troy the' assembled nations draws,  
 But thine, ungrateful, and thy brother's cause ? 210  
 Is this the pay our blood and toils deserve ;  
 Disgraced and injured by the man we serve ?  
 And dar'st thou threat to snatch my prize away,  
 Due to the deeds of many a dreadful day ;  
 A prize as small, O tyrant ! matched with thine, 215  
 As thy own actions if compared to mine.  
 Thine in each conquest is the wealthy prey,  
 Though mine the sweat and danger of the day.  
 Some trivial presents to my ships I bear,  
 Or barren praises pay the wounds of war. 220  
 But know, proud monarch, I'm thy slave no more ;  
 My fleet shall waft me to Thessalia's shore.  
 Left by Achilles on the Trojan plain,  
 What spoils, what conquest shall Atrides gain ?

Ver. 215.] He has substituted this for a different thought in his original, which several of the translators, on account of its ambiguity, have agreed to omit : thus represented by Hobbes :

And, when the city Troy we shall have got,  
 Your share will great, mine little be, therein :

but I prefer Mr. Cowper's acceptation of the passage, with the old commentators :

I never gain, what Trojan town soe'er  
 We ransack, half thy booty :

as Chapman also understood it.

W.

Ver. 218.] Homer only says:

And yet my hands conduct the greatest share  
 Of furious war :

and verse 216 is the mere invention of our translator.

W.

To this the king : Fly, mighty warrior ! fly, 225  
 Thy aid we need not, and thy threats defy.  
 There want not chiefs in such a cause to fight,  
 And Jove himself shall guard a monarch's right.  
 Of all the kings (the Gods' distinguish'd care)  
 To power superior none such hatred bear : 230  
 Strife and debate thy restless soul employ,  
 And wars and horrors are thy savage joy.  
 If thou hast strength, 'twas Heaven that strength be-  
 stow'd,  
 For know, vain man ! thy valour is from God.  
 Haste, launch thy vessels, fly with speed away, 235  
 Rule thy own realms with arbitrary sway :  
 I heed thee not, but prize at equal rate  
 Thy short-liv'd friendship, and thy groundless hate.  
 Go, threat thy earth-born myrmidons ; but here  
 'Tis mine to threaten, Prince, and thine to fear. 240

Ver. 226.] This fine addition to the original he formed upon Dryden's version:

We need not such a friend, nor fear we such a foe. W.

Ver. 229. *Kings, the Gods' distinguish'd care.*] In the original it is *Διοτρεφεῖς*, or *nurst by Jove*. Homer often uses to call his kings by such epithets as *Διογενεῖς*, *born of the Gods*, or *Διοτρεφεῖς*, *bred by the Gods* ; by which he points out to themselves the offices they were ordained for ; and to their people, the reverence that should be paid them. These expressions are perfectly in the exalted style of the eastern nations, and correspondent to those places of holy scripture where they are called *Gods*, and *the sons of the most High*. P.

These epithets in the poets of antiquity were suggested by the power of kings, and their opportunities of service to mankind ; resembling in these respects the *omnipotent givers of good things* : *Διοτρεφες ἐδωκεν* : Od. ©. 325.

Homer says literally :

To me most odious of Jove-nurtur'd kings. W.



Know, if the God the beauteous dame demand,  
 My bark shall waft her to her native land ;  
 But then prepare, imperious Prince ! prepare,  
 Fierce as thou art, to yield thy captive fair :  
 Even in thy tent I'll seize the blooming prize, 245  
 Thy lov'd Briseïs with the radiant eyes.  
 Hence shalt thou prove my might, and curse the hour  
 Thou stood'st a rival of imperial power ;  
 And hence to all our host it shall be known,  
 That kings are subject to the Gods alone. 250

Achilles heard, with grief and rage opprest,  
 His heart swell'd high, and labour'd in his breast.  
 Distracting thoughts by turns his bosom rul'd,  
 Now fir'd by wrath, and now by reason cool'd :  
 That prompts his hand to draw the deadly sword, 255  
 Force thro' the Greeks, and pierce their haughty Lord ;  
 This whispers soft, his vengeance to control,  
 And calm the rising tempest of his soul,  
 Just as in anguish of suspense he stay'd,  
 While half unsheath'd appear'd the glittering blade, 260

Ver. 249.] This couplet is an injudicious expansion of the original, and in some measure an inconsistency ; as Achilles was a *king* like himself. Ogilby is undignified, but represents his author very faithfully. I shall give his couplet with a trivial correction :

That all from this example may beware

Thus to dispute, and haughtily compare. W.

Ver. 251.] In this description the contrast between *rage* and *reason* is engrafted on the original from Dryden.

Moreover, Homer says simply :

He spake, and grief arose to Peleus' son :

but Dacier has:

" Achille, pénétré de douleur et de rage." W.

Ver. 260.] Homer says: " He was drawing his sword." W.

Minerva swift descended from above,  
 Sent by the \* sister and the wife of Jove;  
 (For both the princes claim'd her equal care)  
 Behind she stood, and by the golden hair  
 Achilles seiz'd; to him alone confest, 265  
 A sable cloud conceal'd her from the rest.  
 He sees, and sudden to the Goddess cries,  
 Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes—

Ver. 266.] This is an addition to his author from Dryden:

Just as in act he stood, *in clouds intwin'd*——. W.

Ver. 268.] *Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes.*] They who carry on this allegory after the most minute manner, refer this to the eyes of Achilles, as indeed we must, if we entirely destroy the bodily appearance of Minerva. But what poet designing to have his moral so open, would take pains to form it into a fable? In the proper mythological sense, this passage should be referred to Minerva; according to an opinion of the ancients, who supposed that the Gods had a peculiar light in their eyes. That Homer was not ignorant in this opinion, appears from his use of it in other places, as when in the third Iliad Helena by this means discovers Venus: and that he meant it here, is particularly asserted by Heliodorus, in the third book of his *Æthiopick history*. “The Gods,” says he, are known in their apparitions to men by the fixed glare “of their eyes, or their gliding passage through air without moving their feet; these marks Homer has used from his knowledge “of the *Ægyptian learning*, applying one to Pallas, and the “other to Neptune.” Madam Dacier has gone into the contrary opinion, and blames Eustathius and others, without overthrowing these authorities, or assigning any other reason, but that it was not proper for Minerva's eyes to *sparkle*, when her speech was *mild*. P.

He follows here the generality of editors and translators. Thus Maynwaring, for example:

He knew the goddess by her sparkling eyes:  
 but I prefer Tickell's acceptance, which is mentioned also by several of the old interpreters:

Sudden he turn'd, and started with surprise;

Rage and revenge flash'd dreadful in his eyes.

W.

\* Juno.



Descends Minerva in her guardian care,  
A heavenly witness of the wrongs I bear 270  
From Atreus' son? Then let those eyes that view  
The daring crime, behold the vengeance too.

Forbear! (the progeny of Jove replies)  
To calm thy fury I forsake the skies:  
Let great Achilles, to the Gods resign'd, 275  
To reason yield the empire o'er his mind.  
By awful Juno this command is given;  
The king and you are both the care of Heaven.  
The force of keen reproaches let him feel,  
But sheath, obedient, thy revenging steel. 280  
For I pronounce (and trust a heavenly power)  
Thy injur'd honour has its fated hour,  
When the proud monarch shall thy arms implore,  
And bribe thy friendship with a boundless store.  
Then let revenge no longer bear the sway, 285  
Command thy passions, and the Gods obey.

To her Pelides. With regardful ear  
'Tis just, O Goddess! I thy dictates hear.  
Hard as it is, my vengeance I suppress:  
Those who revere the Gods, the Gods will bless. 290  
He said, observant of the blue-eyed maid;  
Then in the sheath return'd the shining blade.  
The Goddess swift to high Olympus flies,  
And joins the sacred senate of the skies.  
Nor yet the rage his boiling breast forsook, 295  
Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke.

Ver. 273.] For these *four* verses, Homer has only,  
I came to quell thy rage, wouldst thou obey,  
From Heaven.

W.

O monster ! mix'd of insolence and fear,  
 Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer !  
 When wert thou known in ambush'd fights to dare,  
 Or nobly face the horrid front of war ? 300  
 'Tis ours the chance of fighting fields to try,  
 Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die.  
 So much 'tis safer through the camp to go,  
 And rob a subject, than despoil a foe.

Ver. 298. *Thou dog in forehead.*] It has been one of the objections against the manners of Homer's heroes, that they are abusive. Mons. de la Motte affirms in his discourse upon the Iliad, that great men differ from the vulgar in their manner of expressing their passion ; but certainly in violent passions (such as those of Achilles and Agamemnon) the great are as subject as any others to these sallies ; of which we have frequent examples both from history and experience. Plutarch, taking notice of this line, gives it as a particular commendation of Homer, that, " he constantly affords us a fine lecture of morality in his reprehensions and praises, by referring them not to the goods of fortune or the body, but those of the mind, which are in our power, and for which we are blameable or praise-worthy. Thus, says he, Agamemnon is reproached for impudence and fear, Ajax for vain bragging, Idomeneus for the love of contention, and Ulysses does not reprove even Thersites but as a babbler, though he had so many personal deformities to object to him. In like manner also the appellations and epithets with which they accost one another, are generally founded on some distinguishing qualification of merit, as *wise Ulysses, Hector equal to Jove in wisdom, Achilles chief glory of the Greeks,*" and the like. Plutarch of reading Poets. P.

Ver. 299. *In ambush'd fights to dare.*] Homer has magnified the *ambush* as the boldest manner of fight. They went upon those parties with a few men only, and generally the most daring of the army, on occasions of the greatest hazard, where they were therefore more exposed than in a regular battle. Thus Idomeneus in the thirteenth book, expressly tells Meriones, that the greatest courage appears in this way of service, each man being in a manner singled out to the proof of it. Eustathius, P.



Scourge of thy people, violent and base ! 305  
 Sent in Jove's anger on a slavish race,  
 Who lost to sense of generous freedom past,  
 Are tam'd to wrongs, or this had been thy last.  
 Now by this sacred sceptre, hear me swear,  
 Which never more shall leaves or blossoms bear, 310  
 Which sever'd from the trunk (as I from thee)  
 On the bare mountains left its parent tree ;  
 This sceptre, form'd by temper'd steel to prove  
 An ensign of the delegates of Jove,  
 From whom the power of laws and justice springs .  
 (Tremendous oath ! inviolate to kings) 316  
 By this I swear, when bleeding Greece again  
 Shall call Achilles, she shall call in vain.  
 When, flush'd with slaughter, Hector comes to spread  
 The purpled shore with mountains of the dead, 320

Ver. 309. *Now by this sacred sceptre.*] Spondanus in this place blames Eustathius, for saying that Homer makes Achilles in his passion swear by the first thing he meets with; and then assigns (as from himself) two causes, which the other had mentioned so plainly before, that it is a wonder they could be overlooked. The substance of the whole passage in Eustathius is, that if we consider the sceptre simply as wood, Achilles after the manner of the ancients takes in his transport the first thing to swear by; but that Homer himself has in the process of the description assigned reasons why it is proper for the occasion, which may be seen by considering it symbolically. First, That as the wood being cut from the tree will never reunite and flourish, so neither should their amity ever flourish again, after they were divided by this contention.— Secondly, That a sceptre being the mark of power, and symbol of justice, to swear by it might in effect be construed swearing by the God of power, and by justice itself; and accordingly it is spoken of by Aristotle, 3. l. Polit. as a usual solemn oath of kings. P.

Ver. 311. *As I from thee.*] An addition to the original, alluded to in the translator's note. W.

Then shalt thou mourn the' affront thy madness gave,  
Forc'd to deplore, when impotent to save :

Then rage in bitterness of soul, to know  
This act has made the bravest Greek thy foe.

He spoke ; and furious hurl'd against the ground  
His sceptre starr'd with golden studs around. 326

Then sternly silent sat. With like disdain,  
The raging king return'd his frowns again.

To calm their passions with the words of age,  
Slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage, 330

Experienced Nestor, in persuasion skill'd,  
Words, sweet as honey, from his lips distill'd :

Two generations now had pass'd away,  
Wise by his rules, and happy by his sway ;

Ver. 319.] For this lofty couplet, Homer has merely,  
When many fall by murderous Hector's hands. W.

Ver. 321.] The original only says :

———Then shalt thou fret thine inmost soul,  
Griev'd that thou honour'dst not the best of Greeks. W.

Ver. 330.] This is alike contrary to nature and his original.  
He had a good example in Ogilby :

Then *started* Nestor *up*. W.

Ver. 333. *Two generations.*] The commentators make not Nestor to have lived three hundred years (according to Ovid's opinion) ; they take the word γενεά not to signify a century or age of the world, but a generation, or compass of time in which one set of men flourish, which in the common computation is thirty years ; and accordingly is here translated as much the more probable.

From what Nestor says in his speech, Madam Dacier computes the age he was of at the end of the Trojan war. The fight of the Lapithæ and Centaurs fell out fifty-five or fifty-six years before the war of Troy : the quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles happened in the tenth and last year of that war. It was then sixty-five or sixty-six years since Nestor fought against the Centaurs ; he was capable at that time of giving counsel ; so that one cannot ima-



Two ages over his native realm he reign'd; 335  
 And now the' example of the third remain'd.  
 All view'd with awe the venerable man;  
 Who thus with mild benevolence began :

What shame, what woe is this to Greece ! what joy  
 To Troy's proud monarch, and the friends of Troy !  
 That adverse Gods commit to stern debate 341  
 The best, the bravest of the Grecian state.  
 Young as ye are, this youthful heat restrain,  
 Nor think your Nestor's years and wisdom vain.  
 A Godlike race of heroes once I knew, 345  
 Such as no more these aged eyes shall view !  
 Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,  
 Dryas the bold, or Ceneus' deathless name ;  
 Theseus, endued with more than mortal might,  
 Or Polyphemus, like the Gods in fight ? 350  
 With these of old to toils of battle bred,  
 In early youth my hardy days I led ;  
 Fired with the thirst which virtuous envy breeds,  
 And smit with love of honourable deeds.  
 Strongest of men, they pierced the mountain boar, }  
 Ranged the wild desarts red with monsters' gore, }  
 And from their hills the shaggy Centaurs tore. }

gine him to have been under twenty : from whence it will appear that he was now almost arrived to the conclusion of his third age, and about fourscore and five, or fourscore and six years of age. P.

Ver. 334.] This fine verse is our translator's own invention : and so verse 337. W.

Ver. 341.] This thought is not in Homer ; nor does it appear whence our translator derived it. The rhymes are from Ogilby. W.

Ver. 353.] This couplet is supernumerary, and represents no part of the original. W.

Yet these with soft, persuasive arts I sway'd ;  
When Nestor spoke, they listen'd and obey'd.  
If in my youth, even these esteem'd me wise,      360  
Do you, young warriors, hear my age advise.  
Atrides seize not on the beauteous slave ;  
That prize the Greeks by common suffrage gave :  
Nor thou, Achilles, treat our prince with pride ;  
Let kings be just, and sovereign power preside.      365  
Thee the first honours of the war adorn,  
Like Gods in strength, and of a Goddess born ;  
Him awful majesty exalts above  
The powers of earth, and sceptred sons of Jove.  
Let both unite with well-consenting mind,      370  
So shall authority with strength be join'd.  
Leave me, O king ! to calm Achilles' rage ;  
Rule thou thyself, as more advanc'd in age.  
Forbid it Gods ! Achilles should be lost,  
The pride of Greece, and bulwark of our host.      375  
This said, he ceas'd : the king of men replies :  
Thy years are awful, and thy words are wise.  
But that imperious, that unconquer'd soul,  
No laws can limit, no respect control.  
Before his pride must his superiors fall,      380  
His word the law, and he the Lord of all ?  
Him must our hosts, our chiefs, ourself obey ?  
What king can bear a rival in his sway ?  
Grant that the Gods his matchless force have  
given ;  
Has foul reproach a privilege from Heaven ?      385

Ver. 370.] This couplet is interpolated by our translator. W.



Here on the monarch's speech Achilles broke,  
 And furious, thus, and interrupting spoke.  
 Tyrant, I well deserved thy galling chain,  
 To live thy slave, and still to serve in vain,  
 Should I submit to each unjust decree : 390  
 Command thy vassals, but command not me.  
 Seize on Briseïs, whom the Grecians doom'd  
 My prize of war, yet tamely see resum'd ;  
 And seize secure ; no more Achilles draws  
 His conquering sword in any woman's cause. 395  
 The Gods command me to forgive the past ;  
 But let this first invasion be the last :

Ver. 394. — *No more Achilles draws*

*His conquering sword in any woman's cause.]*

When Achilles promises not to contest for Briseïs, he expresses it in a sharp despising air, *I will not fight for the sake of a woman* : by which he glances at Helena, and casts an oblique reflection upon those commanders whom he is about to leave at the siege for her cause. One may observe how well it is fancied of the poet, to make one woman the ground of a quarrel which breaks an alliance that was only formed upon account of another : and how much the circumstance thus considered contributes to keep up the anger of Achilles, for carrying on the poem beyond this dissolution of the council. For (as he himself argues with Ulysses in the sixth Iliad) it is as reasonable for him to retain his anger upon the account of Briseïs, as for the brothers with all Greece to carry on a war upon the score of Helena. I do not know that any commentator has taken notice of this sarcasm of Achilles, which I think a very obvious one. P.

Ver. 396.] He disguises and curtails his author, whose sense is accurately given by Travers:

This hand with thee all future strife shall waive,  
 Since Greece has robb'd me of the prize she gave.  
 What other spoils our sable ships contain,  
 From these let thy rapacious hand refrain:

so that the line before us is the supplement of our poet, and a supplement not very suitable to the character of the speaker. W.

For know, thy blood, when next thou darest invade,  
Shall stream in vengeance on my reeking blade.

At this they ceas'd ; the stern debate expir'd : 400  
The chiefs in sullen majesty retir'd.

Achilles with Patroclus took his way,  
Where near his tents his hollow vessels lay.  
Mean time Atrides launch'd with numerous oars  
A well-rigg'd ship for Chrysa's sacred shores : 405  
High on the deck was fair Chryseïs plac'd,  
And sage Ulysses with the conduct grac'd:  
Safe in her sides the hecatomb they stow'd,  
Then swiftly sailing, cut the liquid road.

The host to expiate, next the king prepares, 410  
With pure lustrations, and with solemn prayers.  
Wash'd by the briny wave, the pious train  
Are cleans'd ; and cast the' ablutions in the main.  
Along the shore whole hecatombs were laid,  
And bulls and goats to Phœbus' altars paid. 415  
The sable fumes in curling spires arise,  
And waft their grateful odours to the skies.

The army thus in sacred rites engag'd,  
Atrides still with deep resentment rag'd.  
To wait his will two sacred heralds stood, 420  
Talthybius and Eurybates the good.  
Haste to the fierce Achilles' tent (he cries)  
Thence bear Briseïs as our royal prize :  
Submit he must ; or if they will not part,  
Ourself in arms shall tear her from his heart. 425

The' unwilling heralds act their lord's com-  
mands :

Pensive they walk along the barren sands :



Arrived, the hero in his tent they find,  
 With gloomy aspect, on his arm reclin'd.  
 At awful distance long they silent stand, 430  
 Loth to advance, or speak their hard command ;  
 Decent confusion ! This the godlike man  
 Perceived, and thus with accent mild began.

With leave and honour enter our abodes,  
 Ye sacred ministers of men and Gods ! 435  
 I know your message ; by constraint you came ;  
 Not you, but your imperious lord I blame.  
 Patroclus haste, the fair Briseïs bring ;  
 Conduct my captive to the haughty king.  
 But witness, heralds, and proclaim my vow, 440  
 Witness to Gods above, and men below !  
 But first, and loudest, to your prince declare,  
 That lawless tyrant whose commands you bear,  
 Unmoved as death Achilles shall remain,  
 Though prostrate Greece should bleed at every vein :  
 The raging chief in frantick passion lost, 446  
 Blind to himself, and useless to his host,

Ver. 427.] Homer says :  
 ———the shore of the *barren sea*. W.

Ver. 429.] He took this mean, extraneous thought and the  
 rhymes from Dryden. W.

Ver. 444.] In the original, Achilles suddenly discontinues his  
 speech without uttering a severe menace, which he had conceived,  
 from a reluctance to involve the rest of the Greeks in the disastrous  
 consequence of his resentment to their leader. Mr. Cowper alone  
 of all the translators, has retained this propriety. W.

Ver. 446.] Homer says exactly,  
 ———he rages with destructive mind,  
 Nor knows to mark the future and the past. W.

Unskill'd to judge the future by the past,  
In blood and slaughter shall repent at last.

Patroclus now the' unwilling beauty brought ; 450  
She, in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,  
Past silent, as the heralds held her hand,  
And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand.  
Not so his loss the fierce Achilles bore ;  
But sad retiring to the sounding shore, 455  
O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,  
That kindred deep, from whence his mother sprung :  
There, bathed in tears of anger and disdain,  
Thus loud lamented to the stormy main.

O parent Goddess ! since in early bloom 460  
Thy son must fall, by too severe a doom ;  
Sure, to so short a race of glory born,  
Great Jove in justice should this span adorn :  
Honour and fame at least the thunderer owed,  
And ill he pays the promise of a God ; 465

Ver. 451.] His author literally,

The woman with them went against her will :  
but Dacier, like our poet: "*Elle les suivoit à regret et dans une*  
*profonde tristesse.*" W.

Ver. 452.] This seems to have been taken from Tickell :

Sore sigh'd she, *as the heralds took her hand ;*  
*And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand :*  
as that was formed from Dryden :

She wept, and often cast her eyes behind :  
of which latter circumstance there is no trace in Homer. W.

Ver. 464. *The thunderer owed.*] This alludes to a story which  
Achilles tells the ambassadors of Agamemnon, Il. ix. That he had  
the choice of two fates: one less glorious at home, but blessed  
with a very long life ; the other full of glory at Troy, but then he  
was never to return. The alternative being thus proposed to him



If yon proud monarch thus thy son defies,  
Obscures my glories, and resumes my prize.

Far from the deep recesses of the main,  
Where aged Ocean holds his watery reign,  
The goddess-mother heard. The waves divide ; 470  
And like a mist she rose above the tide ;  
Beheld him mourning on the naked shores,  
And thus the sorrows of his soul explores.  
Why grieves my son ? Thy anguish let me share,  
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care. 475

He deeply sighing said : To tell my woe,  
Is but to mention what too well you know.  
From Thebè sacred to Apollo's name,  
(Aëtion's realm) our conquering army came,

(not from Jupiter but Thetis who revealed the decree) he chose the latter, which he looks upon as his due, since he gives away length of life for it : and accordingly when he complains to his mother of the disgrace he lies under, it is in this manner he makes a demand of honour.

Mons. de la Motte very judiciously observes, that but for this fore-knowledge of the certainty of his death at Troy, Achilles's character could have drawn but little esteem from the reader. A hero of a vicious mind, blest only with a superiority of strength, and invulnerable into the bargain, was not very proper to excite admiration ; but Homer by this exquisite piece of art has made him the greatest of heroes, who is still pursuing glory in contempt of death, and even under that certainty generously devoting himself in every action. P.

Ver. 478. *From Thebè.*] Homer, who opened his poem with the action which immediately brought on Achilles's anger, being now to give an account of the same thing again, takes his rise more backward in the story. Thus the reader is informed in what he should know, without having been delayed from entering upon the promised subject. This is the first attempt which we see made towards the poetical method of narration, which differs from the historical, in that it does not proceed always directly in the line of

With treasure loaded and triumphant spoils, 480  
 Whose just division crown'd the soldier's toils;  
 But bright Chryseis, heavenly prize! was led,  
 By vote selected, to the general's bed.  
 The priest of Phœbus sought by gifts to gain  
 His beauteous daughter from the victor's chain; 485

time, but sometimes relates things which have gone before, when a more proper opportunity demands it, to make the narration more informing or beautiful.

The foregoing remark is in regard only to the first six lines of this speech. What follows is a rehearsal of the preceding action of the poem, almost in the same words he had used in the opening it; and is one of those faults which has with most justice been objected to our author. It is not to be denied but the account must be tedious, of what the reader had been just before informed; and especially when we are given to understand it was no way necessary, by what Achilles says at the beginning, that *Thetis knew the whole story already*. As to repeating the same lines, a practice usual with Homer, it is not so excusable in this place as in those where messages are delivered in the words they were received, or the like; it being unnatural to imagine, that the person whom the poet introduces as actually speaking, should fall into the self-same words that are used in the narration by the poet himself. Yet Milton was so great an admirer and imitator of our author, as not to have scrupled even this kind of repetition. The passage is at the end of his tenth book, where Adam having declared he would prostrate himself before God in certain particular acts of humiliation, those acts are immediately after described by the poet in the same words. P.

It seems to me, that the best account of these repetitions, so much complained of, in Homer, may be derived from the detached manner, in which his poems were scattered among the Greeks. Separate parts were, doubtless, sung at festivals and public entertainments; and, therefore, to complete the sense, a necessity would frequently arise of fetching *introductions* and *explanatory verses* from preceding parts of the poem. And the same solution may be applied to the recurrence of many single verses at the beginning of speeches throughout the poem. W.



The fleet he reach'd, and, lowly bending down,  
Held forth the sceptre and the laurel crown,  
Entreating all: but chief implored for grace  
The brother-kings of Atreus' royal race:  
The generous Greeks their joint consent declare,  
The priest to reverence, and release the fair; 491  
Not so Atrides: he, with wonted pride,  
The sire insulted, and his gifts denied:  
The' insulted sire (his God's peculiar care)  
To Phœbus pray'd, and Phœbus heard the prayer:  
A dreadful plague ensues, the' avenging darts 496  
Incessant fly, and pierce the Grecian hearts.  
A prophet then, inspir'd by heaven arose,  
And points the crime, and thence derives the woes:  
Myself the first the' assembled chiefs incline 500  
To' avert the vengeance of the power divine;  
Then rising in his wrath, the monarch storm'd;  
Incensed he threaten'd, and his threats perform'd;  
The fair Chryseïs to her sire was sent,  
With offer'd gifts to make the God relent; 505  
But now he seized Briseïs' heavenly charms,  
And of my valour's prize defrauds my arms;  
Defrauds the votes of all the Grecian train;  
And service, faith, and justice, plead in vain.  
But, Goddess! thou thy suppliant son attend, 510  
To high Olympus' shining court ascend,  
Urge all the ties to former service owed,  
And sue for vengeance to the thundering God.  
Oft hast thou triumph'd in the glorious boast,  
That thou stood'st forth of all the' ethereal host, 515

When bold rebellion shook the realms above,  
 The' undaunted guard of cloud-compelling Jove.  
 When the bright partner of his awful reign,  
 The warlike maid, and monarch of the main,  
 The traitor-gods, by mad ambition driven, 520  
 Durst threat with chains the' omnipotence of heaven ;  
 Then, call'd by thee, the monster Titan came,  
 (Whom Gods Briareus, men Ægeon name)

Ver. 514. *Oft hast thou triumph'd.*] The persuasive, which Achilles is here made to put into the mouth of Thetis, is most artfully contrived to suit the present exigency. You, says he, must intreat Jupiter to bring miseries on the Greeks, who are protected by Juno, Neptune, and Minerva: put him therefore in mind that those Deities were once his enemies, and adjure him by that service you did him when those very powers would have bound him, that he will now in his turn assist you against the endeavours they will oppose to my wishes. *Eustathius.*

As for the story itself, some have thought (with whom is Madam Dacier) that there was some imperfect tradition of the fall of the angels for their rebellion, which the Greeks had received by commerce with Ægypt: and thus they account the rebellion of the Gods, the precipitation of Vulcan from heaven, and Jove's threatening the inferior Gods with Tartarus, but as so many hints of scripture faintly imitated. But it seems not improbable that the wars of the Gods, described by the poets, allude to the confusion of the elements before they were brought into their natural order. It is almost generally agreed that by Jupiter is meant the Æther, and by Juno the *Air*: the ancient philosophers supposed the Æther to be igneous, and by its kind influence upon the *air* to be the cause of all vegetation: therefore Homer says in the xivth Iliad, That upon Jupiter's embracing his wife, the earth put forth its plants. Perhaps by Thetis's assisting Jupiter, may be meant that the watery element subsiding and taking its natural place, put an end to this combat of the elements. P.

Ver. 523. *Whom Gods Briareus, men Ægeon name.*] This manner of making the Gods speak a language different from men (which is frequent in Homer) is a circumstance that as far as it widens the distinction between divine and human natures, so far



Through wondering skies enormous stalk'd along;  
 Not \*he that shakes the solid earth so strong: 525  
 With giant-pride at Jove's high throne he stands,  
 And brandish'd round him all his hundred hands;  
 The' affrighted Gods confess'd their awful lord,  
 They dropt the fetters, trembled and ador'd.  
 This, Goddess, this to his remembrance call, 530  
 Embrace his knees, at his tribunal fall;  
 Conjure him far to drive the Grecian train,  
 To hurl them headlong to their fleet and main,  
 To heap the shores with copious death, and bring  
 The Greeks to know the curse of such a king: 335  
 Let Agamemnon lift his haughty head  
 O'er all his wide dominion of the dead,  
 And mourn in blood, that e'er he durst disgrace  
 The boldest warrior of the Grecian race.

Unhappy son! (fair Thetis thus replies, 540  
 While tears celestial trickle from her eyes)  
 Why have I borne thee with a mother's throes,  
 To fates averse, and nursed for future woes?  
 So short a space the light of heaven to view!  
 So short a space! and fill'd with sorrow too! 545

might tend to heighten the reverence paid the Gods. But besides this, as the difference is thus told in poetry, it is of use to the poets themselves: for it appears like a kind of testimony of their inspiration, or their converse with the Gods, and thereby gives a majesty to their works. P.

Ver. 541. *Celestial.*] An interpolated thought from Par. Lost. i. 620. W.

*Tears, such as angels weep.*

Ver. 543.] The *first* clause, not in Homer, is from Dryden:

Ah! wretched me! by *fates averse*, decreed

To bring thee forth with pain, with care to breed! W.

\* Neptune.

O might a parent's careful wish prevail,  
Far, far from Ilion should thy vessels sail ;  
And thou, from camps remote, the danger shun,  
Which now, alas ! too nearly threatens my son.  
Yet (what I can) to move thy suit I'll go 550  
To great Olympus crown'd with fleecy snow.  
Mean time, secure within thy ships, from far  
Behold the field, nor mingle in the war.  
The sire of Gods and all the' ethereal train,  
On the warm limits of the farthest main, 555  
Now mix with mortals, nor disdain to grace  
The feasts of Æthiopia's blameless race :

Ver. 557. *The feasts of Æthiopia's blameless race.*] The Æthiopians, says Diodorus, l. 3. are said to be the inventors of pomps, sacrifices, solemn meetings, and other honours paid to the Gods. From hence arose their character of piety, which is here celebrated by Homer. Among these there was an annual feast at Diospolis, which Eustathius mentions, wherein they carried about the statues of Jupiter and the other Gods, for twelve days, according to their number: to which if we add the ancient custom of setting meat before statues, it will appear a rite from which this fable might easily arise. But it would be a great mistake to imagine from this place, that Homer represents the Gods as eating and drinking upon earth: a gross notion he was never guilty of, as appears from the fifth book, v. 340. Macrobius would have it, that by Jupiter here is meant the sun, and that the number *twelve* hints at the twelve *signs*; but whatever may be said in a critical defence of this opinion; I believe the reader will be satisfied that Homer, considered as a poet, would have his machinery understood upon that system of the Gods which is properly Grecian.

One may take notice here, that it were to be wished some passage were found in any authentick author, that might tell us the time of the year when the Æthiopians kept this festival at Diospolis: for from thence one might determine the precise season of the year wherein the actions of the Iliad are represented to have happened; and perhaps by that means farther explain the beauty and propriety of many passages in the poem. P.



Twelve days the powers indulge the genial rite,  
Returning with the twelfth revolving light.  
Then will I mount the brazen dome, and move 560  
The high tribunal of immortal Jove.

The Goddess spoke : the rolling waves unclose ;  
Then down the deep she plunged from whence she  
rose,

And left him sorrowing on the lonely coast,  
In wild resentment for the fair he lost. 565

In Chrysa's port now sage Ulysses rode ;  
Beneath the deck the destined victims stow'd ;  
The sails they furl'd, they lash'd the mast aside,  
And dropt their anchors, and the pinnacle tied.  
Next on the shore their hecatomb they land, 570  
Chryseis last descending on the strand.

Her, thus returning from the furrow'd main,  
Ulysses led to Phœbus' sacred fane ;  
Where at his solemn altar, as the maid  
He gave to Chryses, thus the hero said. 575

Hail reverend priest ! to Phœbus' awful dome  
A suppliant I from great Atrides come :  
Unransomed here receive the spotless fair ;  
Accept the hecatombs the Greeks prepare ;  
And may thy God who scatters darts around, 580  
Atoned by sacrifice desist to wound.

At this, the sire embraced the maid again,  
So sadly lost, so lately sought in vain.

Ver. 576.] Homer says only, O ! Chryses. W.

Ver. 582.] Homer says,

With this he gave her to her father's arms :

The sire with rapture takes his darling child. W.

Then near the altar of the darting king,  
Disposed in rank their hecatomb they bring : 585  
With water purify their hands, and take  
The sacred offering of the salted cake ;  
While thus with arms devoutly raised in air,  
And solemn voice, the priest directs his prayer.

God of the silver bow, thy ear incline, 590  
Whose power encircles Cilla the divine ;  
Whose sacred eye thy Tenedos surveys,  
And gilds fair Chrysa with distinguish'd rays !  
If, fired to vengeance at thy priest's request,  
Thy direful darts inflict the raging pest ; 595  
Once more attend ! avert the wasteful woe,  
And smile propitious, and unbend thy bow.

So Chryses pray'd, Apollo heard his prayer :  
And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare :  
Between their horns the salted barley threw, 600  
And with their heads to heaven the victims slew :

Ver. 600. *The sacrifice.*] If we consider this passage, it is not made to shine in poetry : all that can be done is to give it numbers and endeavour to set the particulars in a distinct view. But if we take it in another light, and as a piece of learning, it is valuable for being the most exact account of the ancient sacrifices any where left us. There is first the purification, by washing of hands : secondly the offering up of prayers : thirdly the *mola*, or barley-cake thrown upon the victim : fourthly the manner of killing it with the head turned upwards to the celestial Gods (as they turned it downwards when they offered to the infernals) : fifthly their selecting the thighs and fat for their Gods as the best of the sacrifice, and the disposing about them pieces cut from every part for a representation of the whole ; (hence the thighs, or *μῆρια*, are frequently used in Homer and the Greek poets for the whole victim :) sixthly the libation of wine : seventhly consuming the thighs in the fire of the altar : eighthly the sacrificers dressing and feasting on the rest, with joy and hymns to the Gods. P.



The limbs they sever from the' inclosing hide ;  
The thighs, selected to the Gods, divide :  
On these, in double cawls involved with art,  
The choicest morsels lay from every part. 605  
The priest himself before his altar stands,  
And burns the offering with his holy hands,  
Pours the black wine, and sees the flames aspire ;  
The youth with instruments surround the fire :  
The thighs thus sacrificed, and entrails drest, 610  
The' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest :  
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,  
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.  
When now the rage of hunger was repress,  
With pure libations they conclude the feast ; 615  
The youths with wine the copious goblets crown'd,  
And pleased, dispense the flowing bowls around.  
With hymns divine the joyous banquet ends,  
The Pæans lengthen'd till the sun descends :  
The Greeks, restored, the grateful notes prolong ;  
Apollo listens, and approves the song. 621  
'Twas night ; the chiefs beside their vessel lie,  
'Till rosy morn had purpled o'er the sky :  
Then launch, and hoist the mast ; indulgent gales,  
Supplied by Phœbus, fill the swelling sails ; 625  
The milk-white canvas bellying as they blow,  
The parted ocean foams and roars below :

Ver. 600] Is not in the original, which all the translators have variously mistaken. Homer only says, that " they brought " forth the salt barley-cakes."

Ver. 620.] A beautiful couplet, wrought from *four* words of his author: " His mind was delighted, as he listened." W.

Above the bounding billows swift they flew,  
 'Till now the Grecian camp appear'd in view.  
 Far on the beach they haul their bark to land, 630  
 (The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)  
 Then part, where stretch'd along the winding bay  
 The ships and tents in mingled prospect lay.

But raging still, amidst his navy sat  
 The stern Achilles, stedfast in his hate; 635  
 Nor mix'd in combat, nor in council join'd;  
 But wasting cares lay heavy on his mind:  
 In his black thoughts revenge and slaughter roll,  
 And scenes of blood rise dreadful in his soul.

Twelve days were past, and now the dawning  
                   light 640  
 The Gods had summon'd to the' Olympian height:  
 Jove first ascending from the watery bowers,  
 Leads the long order of ethereal powers.

Ver. 632.] For this couplet Homer has only,  
 They to the tents and ships themselves disperst. W.

Ver. 638.] Our poet has mistaken his original (as Tickell also),  
 misled, I presume, by Dryden. Ogilby, Travers, Chapman,  
 and Cowper, render the passage with fidelity. The version of the  
 former I will quote.

But sad Achilles, full of discontents,  
 Neither the council nor the field frequents;  
 But, at his fleet remaining, would not fight,  
 Though war and battles were his chief delight. W.

Ver. 642.] He was led into this mistake by Dryden's version:  
 Jove at their head *ascending from the sea*:

whereas Homer had only said, that Jupiter was gone *towards* the  
 ocean on a visit to the Æthiopians, who are said in *Odyssey*, i. 22,  
 to be "the remotest of mankind." Ogilby is accurate, and not  
 contemptible in neatness:

And now, twelve days expired, the feasted Gods,  
 Attending Jove, return'd to their abodes.



When like the morning mist in early day,  
Rose from the flood the daughter of the sea; 645  
And to the seats divine her flight address.  
There, far apart, and high above the rest,  
The thunderer sat; where old Olympus shrouds  
His hundred heads in heaven, and props the clouds,  
Suppliant the Goddess stood: one hand she plac'd 650  
Beneath his beard, and one his knees embrac'd.  
If e'er, O father of the Gods! she said,  
My words could please thee, or my actions aid;  
Some marks of honour on my son bestow,  
And pay in glory what in life you owe. 655  
Fame is at least by heavenly promise due  
To life so short, and now dishonour'd too.  
Avenge this wrong, oh ever just and wise!  
Let Greece be humbled, and the Trojans rise;  
'Till the proud king, and all the' Achaian race, 660  
Shall heap with honours him they now disgrace.  
Thus Thetis spoke, but Jove in silence held  
The sacred councils of his breast conceal'd.  
Not so repulsed, the Goddess closer prest,  
Still grasp'd his knees, and urged the dear request. 665

The remainder of Pope's version, to the speech of Thetis, is neither executed with fidelity, nor all his accustomed elegance. The translations of Tickell and Travers united thus well exhibit the former part:

Twelve days were past, and now the' ethereal train,  
Jove at their head, to heaven return'd again:  
When careful Thetis with the dawning light  
Rose from the deep, and reached the' Olympian height.  
There, far apart, Saturnian Jove she found;  
High o'er the rest he view'd the prospect round.

O sire of Gods and men ! thy suppliant hear ;  
 Refuse, or grant ; for what has Jove to fear ?  
 Or oh ! declare, of all the powers above,  
 Is wretched Thetis least the care of Jove ?

She said, and sighing thus the God replies, 670  
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies.

What hast thou ask'd ! Ah why should Jove engage

In foreign contests and domestic rage,  
The Gods' complaints, and Juno's fierce alarms,  
While I, too partial, aid the Trojan arms ? 675  
Go, lest the haughty partner of my sway  
With jealous eyes thy close access survey ;  
But part in peace, secure thy prayer is sped :  
Witness the sacred honours of our head,  
The nod that ratifies the will divine, 680  
The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable sign ;  
This seals thy suit, and this fulfils thy vows—  
He spoke ; and awful bends his sable brows ;

Ver. 673.] These "foreign contests," and "Gods' complaints," are gratuitous additions, which weaken the purport of the passage. W.

Ver. 681. *The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable sign.*] There are among men three things by which the efficacy of a promise may be void; the design not to perform it, the want of power to bring it to pass, and the instability of our tempers; from all which Homer saw that the divinity must be exempted, and therefore he describes the *nod*, or ratification of Jupiter's word, as *faithful*, in opposition to *fraud*; *sure* of being performed, in opposition to *weakness*, and *irrevocable*, in opposition to our *repenting* of a promise.—*Eustathius.* P.

Ver. 683. *He spoke ; and awful bends.*] This description of the majesty of Jupiter has something exceedingly grand and venerable. Macrobius reports, that Phidias, having made his Olympian Jupiter,



Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod ;  
The stamp of Fate, and sanction of the God : 685  
High heaven with trembling dread the signal took,  
And all Olympus to the centre shook.

Swift to the seas profound the Goddess flies,  
Jove to his starry mansion in the skies.  
The shining synod of the' immortals wait 690  
The coming God, and from their thrones of state  
Arising silent, wrapt in holy fear,  
Before the Majesty of Heaven appear.  
Trembling they stand, while Jove assumes the  
throne,

All, but the God's imperious queen alone : 695  
Late had she view'd the silver-footed dame,  
And all her passions kindled into flame.  
Say, artful manager of heaven (she cries)  
Who now partakes the secrets of the skies ?  
Thy Juno knows not the decrees of fate, 700  
In vain the partner of imperial state.

What favourite Goddess then those cares divides,  
Which Jove in prudence from his consort hides ?

To this the Thunderer : Seek not thou to find  
The sacred counsels of almighty mind : 705  
Involved in darkness lies the great decree,  
Nor can the depths of fate be pierced by thee.  
What fits thy knowledge, thou the first shalt know,  
The first of Gods above, and men below ;

which past for one of the greatest miracles of art, was asked from what pattern he framed so divine a figure, and answered, it was from that archetype which he found in these lines of Homer. P.

But thou, nor they, shall search the thoughts that  
roll 710

Deep in the close recesses of my soul.

Full on the sire the Goddess of the skies  
Roll'd the large orbs of her majestic eyes,  
And thus return'd. Austere Saturnius, say,  
From whence this wrath, or who controls thy  
sway? 715

Thy boundless will, for me, remains in force,  
And all thy counsels take the destined course.  
But 'tis for Greece I fear : for late was seen  
In close consult the silver-footed queen.  
Jove to his Thetis nothing could deny, 720  
Nor was the signal vain that shook the sky.  
What fatal favour has the Goddess won,  
To grace her fierce, inexorable son ?  
Perhaps in Grecian blood to drench the plain,  
And glut his vengeance with my people slain. 725

Then thus the God : Oh restless fate of pride,  
That strives to learn what heaven resolves to hide !  
Vain is the search, presumptuous and abhorr'd,  
Anxious to thee, and odious to thy Lord !  
Let this suffice, the' immutable decree 730  
No force can shake : what *is*, that *ought* to be.  
Goddess submit, nor dare our will withstand,  
But dread the power of this avenging hand ;

Ver. 730.] Our author has misconceived, or inadequately represented, his original ; which Hobbes and Chapman had properly exhibited, but Mr. Cowper since with simplicity and neatness also :

And be it as thou sayest—I am well pleased  
That so it should be.

W.



The' united strength of all the Gods above  
In vain resists the' omnipotence of Jove. 735

The Thunderer spoke, nor durst the queen reply ;  
A reverend horror silenced all the sky.

The feast disturbed, with sorrow Vulcan saw  
His mother menaced, and the Gods in awe ;  
Peace at his heart, and pleasure his design, 740  
Thus interposed the architect divine.

The wretched quarrels of the mortal state  
Are far unworthy, Gods ! of your debate :  
Let men their days in senseless strife employ,  
We, in eternal peace, and constant joy. 745

Thou, Goddess-mother, with our sire comply,  
Nor break the sacred union of the sky :  
Lest, rous'd to rage, he shake the blest abodes,  
Launch the red lightning, and dethrone the Gods.  
If you submit, the thunderer stands pleas'd ; 750  
The gracious power is willing to be pleas'd.

Thus Vulcan spoke ; and rising with a bound,  
The double bowl with sparkling Nectar crown'd,  
Which held to Juno in a chearful way,  
Goddess (he cried) be patient and obey. 755  
Dear as you are, if Jove his arm extend,  
I can but grieve, unable to defend.  
What God so daring in your aid to move,  
Or lift his hand against the force of Jove ?

Ver. 736.] The translators have generally agreed in suppressing  
a thought of the original, thus represented by Ogilby :

This said, she silent sate, fearing his frown,

And strove to keep her rising stomach down.

This is, doubtless, trivial and undignified ; but gives the genuine  
force of the Greek in our vulgar idiom. W.

Once in your cause I felt his matchless might, 760  
 Hurl'd headlong downward from the' ethereal height;  
 Tost all the day in rapid circles round;  
 Nor till the sun descended, touch'd the ground:  
 Breathless I fell, in giddy motion lost;  
 The Sinthians raised me on the Lemnian coast. 765

He said, and to her hands the goblet heav'd,  
 Which, with a smile, the white-armed queen receiv'd.  
 Then to the rest he fill'd, and in his turn,  
 Each to his lips applied the nectar'd urn.  
 Vulcan with aukward grace his office plies, 770  
 And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the skies.

Thus the blest Gods the genial day prolong,  
 In feasts ambrosial, and celestial song.  
 Apollo tuned the lyre; the Muses round  
 With voice alternate aid the silver sound. 775  
 Meantime the radiant sun, to mortal sight  
 Descending swift, rolled down the rapid light.  
 Then to their starry domes the Gods depart,  
 The shining monuments of Vulcan's art:

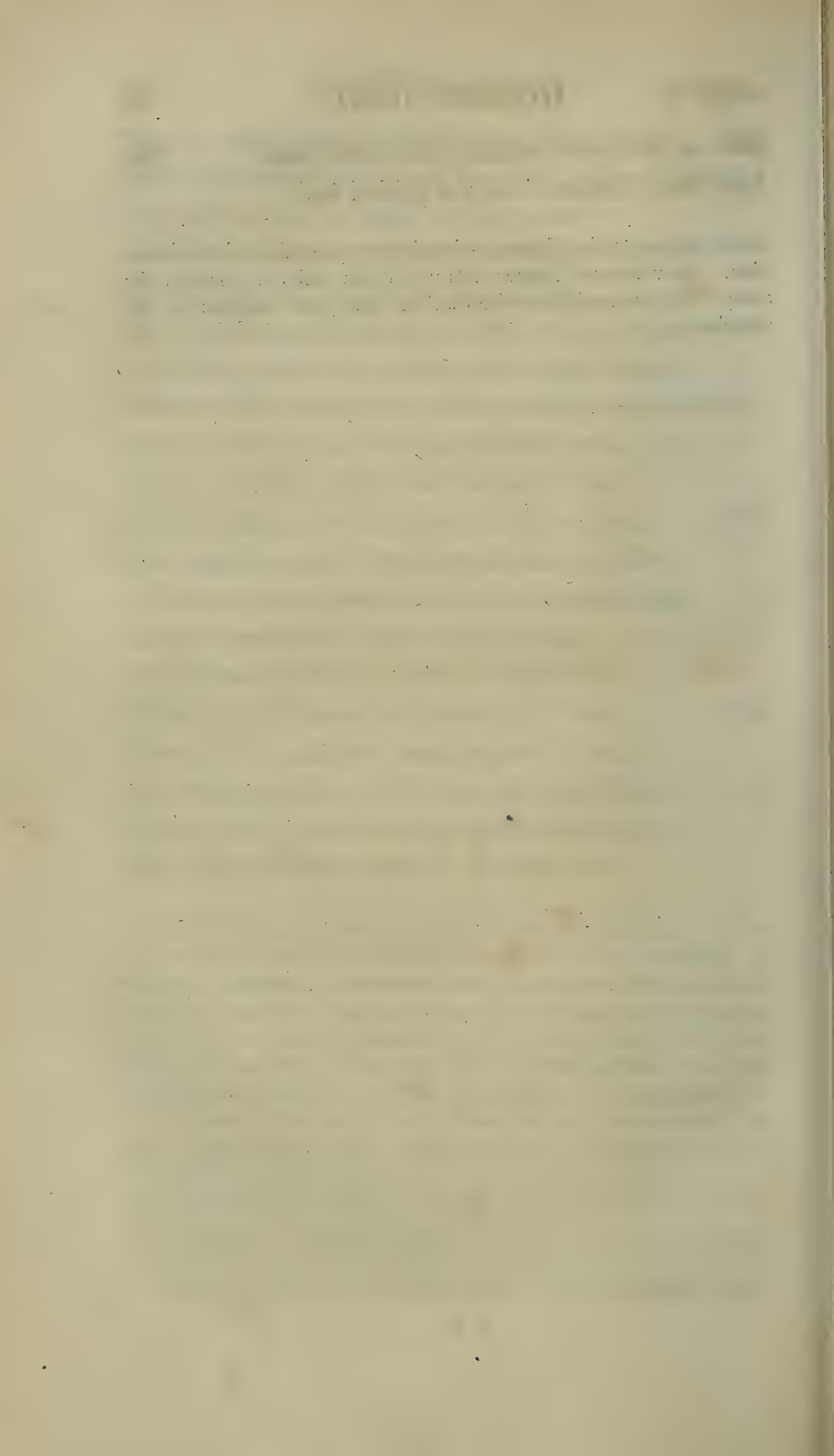
Ver. 760. *Once in your cause I felt his matchless might.*] “ They  
 “ who search another vein of allegory for hidden knowledge in  
 “ natural philosophy, have considered Jupiter and Juno as *heaven*  
 “ and the *air*, whose alliance is interrupted when the air is troubled  
 “ above, but restored again when it is cleared by heat, or Vulcan  
 “ the God of heat. Him they call a divine artificer, from the  
 “ activity or general use of fire in working. They suppose him  
 “ to be born in heaven, where philosophers say that element has  
 “ its proper place; and is thence derived to the earth, which is  
 “ signified by the fall of Vulcan; that he fell in Lemnos, because  
 “ that Island abounds with subterranean fires; and that he contract-  
 “ ed a lameness or imperfection by the fall; the fire not being so  
 “ pure and active below, but mixed and terrestrial.” *Eustathius*. P.

Ver. 778. *Then to their starry domes.*] The Astrologers assign



Jove on his couch reclined his awful head,        780  
And Juno slumber'd on the golden bed.

twelve houses to the planets, wherein they are said to have dominion. Now because Homer tells us Vulcan built a mansion for every God, the ancients write that he first gave occasion to this doctrine.        P.





THE  
SECOND BOOK

OF THE

I L I A D.

## THE ARGUMENT.

---

THE TRIAL OF THE ARMY AND CATALOGUE OF THE FORCES.

*JUPITER*, in pursuance of the request of *Thetis*, sends a deceitful vision to *Agamemnon*, persuading him to lead the army to battle; in order to make the Greeks sensible of their want of *Achilles*. The General, who is deluded with the hopes of taking *Troy* without his assistance, but fears the army was discouraged by his absence and the late plague, as well as by the length of time, contrives to make trial of their disposition by a stratagem. He first communicates his design to the Princes in council, that he would propose a return to the soldiers, and that they should put a stop to them if the proposal was embraced. Then he assembles the whole host, and upon moving for a return to *Greece*, they unanimously agree to it, and run to prepare the ships. They are detained by the management of *Ulysses*, who chastises the insolence of *Thersites*. The Assembly is recalled, several speeches made on the occasion, and at length the advice of *Nestor* followed, which was to make a general muster of the troops, and to divide them into their several nations, before they proceeded to battle. This gives occasion to the Poet to enumerate all the forces of the Greeks and Trojans, and in a large catalogue.

The time employed in this book consists not entirely of one day. The scene lies in the Grecian camp and upon the sea-shore; toward the end it removes to *Troy*. P.



THE  
SECOND BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

---

NOW pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye,  
Stretched in the tents the Grecian leaders lie,  
The' immortals slumbered on their thrones above;  
All, but the ever-wakeful eyes of Jove.  
To honour Thetis' son he bends his care, 5  
And plunge the Græeks in all the woes of war:  
Then bids an empty phantom rise to sight,  
And thus commands the vision of the night.  
Fly hence, deluding dream ! and light as air,  
To Agamemnon's ample tent repair. 10  
Bid him in arms draw forth the' embattled train,  
Lead all his Grecians to the dusty plain.

Ver. 2.] The original says nothing about the Greeks in particular. W.

Ver. 7.] He omits one circumstance, which Travers has briefly and elegantly exhibited:

*Resolv'd at last, a flattering dream he chose:*

Swift at his call the dream officious rose. W.

Declare, even now 'tis given him to destroy  
 The lofty towers of wide-extended Troy.  
 For now no more the Gods with Fate contend,      15  
 At Juno's suit the heavenly factions end.  
 Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,  
 And nodding Ilion waits the' impending fall.  
     Swift as the word the vain Illusion fled,  
 Descends, and hovers o'er Atrides' head;      20  
 Clothed in the figure of the Pylian sage,  
 Renown'd for wisdom, and revered for age;  
 Around his temples spreads his golden wing,  
 And thus the flattering dream deceives the king.  
     Canst thou, with all a monarch's cares opprest, 25  
 Oh Atreus' son! canst thou indulge thy rest?  
 Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,  
 Directs in council, and in war presides,  
 To whom its safety a whole people owes,  
 To waste long nights in indolent repose.      30

Ver. 15.] His original only says, without any mention of *fate*:  
 No more the' Olympian Gods consult apart.      W.

Ver. 19.] In this narration our poet has omitted the circumstances of the dream's "course to the ships;" and "Agamemnon's peculiar respect for Nestor." The following speech is admirably managed.      W.

Ver. 20. *Descends, and hovers o'er Atrides' head.*] The whole action of the *dream* is beautifully natural, and agreeable to philosophy. It perches on his head, to intimate that part to be the seat of the soul: it is circumfused about him, to express that total possession of the senses which fancy has during our sleep. It takes the figure of the person who was dearest to Agamemnon; as whatever we think of most, when awake, is the common object of our dreams. And just at the instant of its vanishing, it leaves such an impression that the voice seems still to sound in his ear. No description can be more exact or lively. *Eustathius. Dacier.*      P.



Monarch awake ! 'tis Jove's command I bear,  
Thou and thy glory claim his heavenly care.  
In just array draw forth the' embattled train,  
Lead all thy Grecians to the dusty plain :  
Even now, O king ! 'tis given thee to destroy      35  
The lofty towers of wide-extended Troy.  
For now no more the Gods with Fate contend,  
At Juno's suit the heavenly factions end.  
Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,  
And nodding Ilion waits the' impending fall.      40  
Awake, but waking this advice approve,  
And trust the vision that descends from Jove.

Ver. 33. *Draw forth the' embattled train, &c.*] The dream here repeats the message of Jupiter in the same terms that he received it. It is no less than the father of Gods and men who gives the order, and to alter a word were presumption. Homer constantly makes his envoys observe this practice as a mark of decency and respect. Madam Dacier and others have applauded this in general, and asked by what authority an ambassador could alter the terms of his commission, since he is not greater or wiser than the person who gave the charge ? But this is not always the case in our author, who not only makes use of this conduct with respect to the orders of a higher power, but in regard to equals also ; as when one Goddess desires another to represent such an affair, and she immediately takes the words from her mouth and repeats them, of which we have an instance in this book. Some objection too may be raised in this manner, when commissions are given in the utmost haste (in a battle or the like) upon sudden emergencies, where it seems not very natural to suppose a man has time to get so many words by heart as he is made to repeat exactly. In the present instance, the repetition is certainly graceful, though Zenodotus thought it not so the third time, when Agamemnon tells his dream to the council. I do not pretend to decide upon the point : for though the reverence of the repetition seemed less needful in that place, than when it was delivered immediately from Jupiter ; yet (as Eustathius observes) it was necessary for the assembly to know the circum-

The phantom said ; then vanished from his sight,  
 Resolves to air, and mixes with the night.  
 A thousand schemes the monarch's mind employ ; 45  
 Elate in thought, he sacks untaken Troy :  
 Vain as he was, and to the future blind,  
 Nor saw what Jove and secret Fate designed ;  
 What mighty toils to either host remain,  
 What scenes of grief, and numbers of the slain ! 50  
 Eager he rises, and in fancy hears  
 The voice celestial murmuring in his ears.  
 First on his limbs a slender vest he drew,  
 Around him next the regal mantle threw,  
 The' embroider'd sandals on his feet were tied ; 55  
 The starry faulchion glittered at his side ;  
 And last his arm the massy sceptre loads,  
 Unstain'd, immortal, and the gift of Gods.

Now rosy morn ascends the court of Jove,  
 Lifts up her light, and opens day above. 60  
 The king dispatch'd his heralds with commands  
 To range the camp and summon all the bands :  
 The gathering hosts the monarch's word obey ;  
 While to the fleet Atrides bends his way.  
 In his black ship the Pylian prince he found ; 65  
 There calls a senate of the peers around :  
 The' assembly placed, the king of men exprest  
 The counsels labouring in his artful breast.

stances of this dream, that the truth of the relation might be unsuspected. P.

Ver. 55. Homer says only,

— and round

His shoulders cast the silver-studded sword.

W.



Friends and confederates ! with attentive ear  
Receive my words, and credit what you hear. 70  
Late as I slumber'd in the shades of night,  
A dream divine appear'd before my sight ;  
Whose visionary form like Nestor came,  
The same in habit, and in mien the same.  
The heavenly phantom hover'd o'er my head, 75  
And, Dost thou sleep, oh Atreus' son ? (he said)  
Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,  
Directs in council, and in war presides,  
To whom its safety a whole people owes,  
To waste long nights in indolent repose. 80  
Monarch awake : 'tis Jove's command I bear,  
Thou and thy glory claim his heavenly care.  
In just array draw forth the' embattled train,  
And lead the Grecians to the dusty plain :  
Even now, O king ! 'tis given thee to destroy 85  
The lofty towers of wide-extended Troy.  
For now no more the Gods with Fate contend,  
At Juno's suit the heavenly factions end.  
Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,  
And nodding Ilion waits the' impending fall. 90  
This hear observant, and the Gods obey !  
The vision spoke, and past in air away.  
Now, valiant chiefs, since heaven itself alarms,  
Unite, and rouse the sons of Greece to arms :  
But first, with caution, try what yet they dare, 95  
Worn with nine years of unsuccessful war.

Ver. 92.] He might easily have included the whole sense of his original :

The vision spake, and fled *with sleep* away.

W.

To move the troops to measure back the main,  
Be mine ; and yours the province to detain.

He spoke, and sat ; when Nestor rising said,  
(Nestor, whom Pylos' sandy realms obey'd) 100  
Princes of Greece, your faithful ears incline,  
Nor doubt the vision of the powers divine ;  
Sent by great Jove to him who rules the host,  
Forbid it, heaven ! this warning should be lost !  
Then let us haste, obey the God's alarms, 105  
And join to rouse the sons of Greece to arms.

Thus spoke the sage : the kings without delay  
Dissolve the council, and their chief obey :  
The sceptred rulers lead ; the following host  
Pour'd forth by thousands, darkens all the coast. 110  
As from some rocky cleft the shepherd sees  
Clustering in heaps on heaps the driving bees,  
Rolling, and blackening, swarms succeeding swarms,  
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms ;  
Dusky they spread, a close embodied crowd, 115  
And o'er the vale descends the living cloud—  
So, from the tents and ships, a lengthening train  
Spreads all the beach, and wide o'ershades the plain :  
Along the region runs a deafening sound ;  
Beneath their footsteps groans the trembling ground.

Ver. 96.] This line is a supplement from the translator. W.

Ver. 101.] This speech is executed with great skill, but not in sufficient conformity to his author. Thus Travers, with more fidelity :

Then Nestor, who in sandy Pylos reign'd :  
Say, friends and heroes ! can the dream be feign'd ?  
No voice, but this, had influence gain'd on me :  
'Tis sacred truth, Atrides ! speaks in thee. W.



Fame flies before, the messenger of Jove, 121  
 And shining soars, and claps her wings above.  
 Nine sacred heralds now, proclaiming loud  
 The monarch's will, suspend the listening crowd.  
 Soon as the throngs in order ranged appear, 125  
 And fainter murmurs died upon the ear,  
 The king of kings his awful figure rais'd ;  
 High in his hand the golden sceptre blaz'd :  
 The golden sceptre, of celestial frame,  
 By Vulcan form'd, from Jove to Hermes came : 130  
 To Pelops he the' immortal gift resign'd ;  
 The' immortal gift great Pelops left behind,  
 In Atreus' hand, which not with Atreus ends,  
 To rich Thyestes next the prize descends ;  
 And now the mark of Agamemnon's reign, 135  
 Subjects all Argos, and controls the main.

On this bright sceptre now the king reclin'd,  
 And artful thus pronounced the speech design'd :  
 Ye sons of Mars ! partake your leader's care,  
 Heroes of Greece, and brothers of the war ! 140  
 Of partial Jove with justice I complain,  
 And heavenly oracles believed in vain.  
 A safe return was promised to our toils,  
 Renown'd, triumphant, and enriched with spoils.  
 Now shameful flight alone can save the host, 145  
 Our blood, our treasure, and our glory lost.

V. 121. Our poet here indulges his invention without restraint ;  
 for his original says simply, with no such embellishments,

— among them Rumour glow'd,

Exciting to depart, Jove's messenger.

W.

Ver. 136.] Rather, as more expressive of his author,

All Argos *sways*, and *islands of* the main.

W.

So Jove decrees, resistless Lord of all !  
 At whose command whole empires rise or fall :  
 He shakes the feeble props of human trust,  
 And towns and armies humbles to the dust. 150  
 What shame to Greece a fruitless war to wage,  
 Oh lasting shame in every future age !  
 Once great in arms, the common scorn we grow,  
 Repulsed and baffled by a feeble foe.  
 So small their number, that if wars were ceas'd, 155  
 And Greece triumphant held a general feast,  
 All rank'd by tens, whole decads when they dine  
 Must want a Trojan slave to pour the wine.  
 But other forces have our hopes o'erthrown,  
 And Troy prevails by armies not her own. 160

Ver. 155. *So small their number, &c.*] This part has a low air in comparison with the rest of the speech. Scaliger calls it *tabernariam orationem* : but it is well observed by Madam Dacier, that the image Agamemnon here gives of the Trojans, does not only render their numbers contemptible in comparison of the Greeks, but their persons too : for it makes them appear but as a few vile slaves fit only to serve them with wine. To which we may add, that it affords a prospect to his soldiers of their future state and triumph after the conquest of their enemies.

This passage gives me occasion to animadvert upon a computation of the number of the Trojans, which the learned Angelus Politian has offered at in his *preface to Homer*. He thinks they were fifty-thousand without the auxiliaries, from the conclusion of the eighth Iliad, where it is said there were a thousand Trojan fires and fifty men attending each of them. But that the auxiliaries are to be admitted into that number, appears plainly from this place : Agamemnon expressly distinguishes the native Trojans from the aids, and reckons but one to ten Grecians, at which estimate there could not be above ten thousand Trojans. *See the notes on the catalogue.* P.

This is not exact. Chapman's homely version has given the true sense of Homer :



Now nine long years of mighty Jove are run,  
 Since first the labours of this war begun :  
 Our cordage torn, decay'd our vessels lie,  
 And scarce ensure the wretched power to fly.  
 Haste then, for ever leave the Trojan wall ! 165  
 Our weeping wives, our tender children call :  
 Love, duty, safety, summon us away,  
 'Tis Nature's voice, and Nature we obey.  
 Our shatter'd barks may yet transport us o'er,  
 Safe and inglorious, to our native shore. 170  
 Fly, Grecians, fly, your sails and oars employ,  
 And dream no more of heaven-defended Troy.

His deep design unknown, the hosts approve  
 Atrides' speech. The mighty numbers move.  
 So roll the billows to the' Icarian shore, 175  
 From east and south when winds begin to roar,  
 Burst their dark mansions in the clouds, and sweep  
 The whitening surface of the ruffled deep.  
 And as on corn when western gusts descend,  
 Before the blast the lofty harvests bend : 180

— Yet should our foes and we

*Strike truce, and number both our powers.—*

W.

Ver. 168.] This is substituted for ideas in the original thus represented by Travers :

Unfinish'd here the work of conquest lies ;

Through all our toils the' abortive glory dies.

Ver. 175. *So roll the billows, &c.*] One may take notice that Homer in these two similitudes has judiciously made choice of the two most wavering and inconstant things in nature, to compare with the multitude : the *waves* and *ears of corn*. The first allude to the noise and tumult of the people, in the breaking and rolling of the billows ; the second to their taking the same course, like corn bending one way ; and both to the easiness with which they are moved by every *breath*. P.

Thus o'er the field the moving host appears,  
With nodding plumes and groves of waving spears.  
The gathering murmur spreads, their trampling feet  
Beat the loose sands, and thicken to the fleet.  
With long-resounding cries they urge the train 185  
To fit the ships, and launch into the main.  
They toil, they sweat, thick clouds of dust arise,  
The doubling clamours echo to the skies.  
Even then the Greeks had left the hostile plain,  
And Fate decreed the fall of Troy in vain; 190  
But Jove's imperial Queen their flight survey'd,  
And sighing thus bespoke the blue-eyed maid.  
Shall then the Grecians fly ! Oh dire disgrace !  
And leave unpunish'd this perfidious race ?  
Shall Troy, shall Priam, and the' adulterous spouse,  
In peace enjoy the fruits of broken vows ? 196  
And bravest chiefs, in Helen's quarrel slain,  
Lie unrevenged on yon detested plain ?  
No : let my Greeks, unmov'd by vain alarms,  
Once more refulgent shine in brazen arms. 200  
Haste, goddess, haste ! the flying host detain,  
Nor let one sail be hoisted on the main.  
Pallas obeys, and from Olympus' height  
Swift to the ships precipitates her flight ;  
Ulysses, first in publick cares, she found, 205  
For prudent counsel like the Gods renown'd :

Ver. 193.] This is not Homer. Ogilby is generally more faithful :

Ah ! thou unconquer'd daughter of great Jove,  
Shall thus the Greeks their tedious siege remove,  
Through billows flying to their native coast ?



Oppress'd with generous grief the hero stood,  
 Nor drew his sable vessels to the flood.  
 And is it thus, divine Laërtes' son !  
 Thus fly the Greeks (the martial maid begun) 210  
 Thus to their country bear their own disgrace,  
 And fame eternal leave to Priam's race ?  
 Shall beauteous Helen still remain unfreed,  
 Still unrevenged, a thousand heroes bleed ?  
 Haste, generous Ithacus ! prevent the shame, 215  
 Recall your armies, and your chiefs reclaim.  
 Your own resistless eloquence employ,  
 And to the' Immortals trust the fall of Troy.

The voice divine confess'd the warlike maid,  
 Ulysses heard, nor uninspired obey'd : 220  
 Then meeting first Atrides, from his hand  
 Received the' imperial sceptre of command.  
 Thus graced, attention and respect to gain,  
 He runs, he flies through all the Grecian train ;  
 Each prince of name, or chief in arms approv'd, 225  
 He fired with praise, or with persuasion mov'd.

Warriors like you, with strength and wisdom  
 blest,  
 By brave examples should confirm the rest.  
 The monarch's will not yet reveal'd appears ;  
 He tries our courage, but resents our fears. 230

Ver. 220.] Our poet, by a strange oversight, I presume, and not intentionally, has passed over *two* verses of the original ; thus delineated, not contemptibly for the time, by faithful Ogilby :

The virgin's heavenly voice Ulysses knew,  
 And, straight obeying, off his mantle threw,  
 Which up Eurybates his herald took,  
 Who, still attending, ne'er his charge forsook. W.

The' unwary Greeks his fury may provoke ;  
Not thus the king in secret council spoke.  
Jove loves our chief, from Jove his honour springs,  
Beware ! for dreadful is the wrath of kings.

But if a clamorous vile Plebeian rose, 235  
Him with reproof he check'd, or tamed with blows.  
Be still, thou slave, and to thy betters yield ;  
Unknown alike in council and in field !  
Ye Gods, what dastards would our host command !  
Swept to the war, the lumber of a land. 240  
Be silent, wretch, and think not here allow'd  
That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.  
To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway ;  
His are the laws, and him let all obey.  
With words like these the troops Ulysses rul'd, 245  
The loudest silenced, and the fiercest cool'd.  
Back to the assembly roll the thronging train,  
Desert the ships, and pour upon the plain.

Ver. 243. *To one sole monarch.*] Those persons are under a mistake who would make this sentence a praise of absolute monarchy. Homer speaks it only with regard to a general of an army during the time of his commission. Nor is Agamemnon styled *king of kings* in any other sense, than as the rest of the princes had given him the supreme authority over them in the siege. Aristotle defines a king, *Leader of the war, Judge of controversies, and President of the ceremonies of the Gods*. That he had the principal care of religious rites, appears from many places in Homer ; and that his power was no where absolute but in war ; for we find Agamemnon insulted in the council, but in the army threatening deserters with death. He was under an obligation to preserve the privileges of his country, pursuant to which kings are called by our author, the dispensers or managers of justice. And Dionysius of Halicarnassus acquaints us, that the old Grecian Kings, whether hereditary or elective, had a council of their chief men, as Homer and the most ancient poets testify ; nor was it (he adds) in those



Murmuring they move, as when old ocean roars,  
 And heaves huge surges to the trembling shores : 250  
 The groaning banks are burst with bellowing sound,  
 The rocks remurmur, and the deeps rebound.  
 At length the tumult sinks, the noises cease,  
 And a still silence lulls the camp to peace.  
 Thersites only clamour'd in the throng, 255  
 Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue :  
 Awed by no shame, by no respect control'd,  
 In scandal busy, in reproaches bold :

times as in ours, when kings have a full liberty to do whatever they please. *Dion. Hal. lib. ii. Hist.* P.

Ver. 255. *Thersites only.*] The ancients have ascribed to Homer the first sketch of *satyric* or *comic* poetry, of which sort was his poem called *Margites*, as Aristotle reports. Though that piece be lost, this character of Thersites may give us a taste of his vein in that kind. But whether ludicrous descriptions ought to have place in the *epic* poem, has been justly questioned : neither Virgil nor any of the most approved ancients have thought fit to admit them into their compositions of that nature ; nor any of the best moderns except Milton, whose fondness for Homer might be the reason of it. However this is in its kind a very masterly part, and our author has shown great judgment in the particulars he has chosen to compose the picture of a pernicious creature of wit ; the chief of which are a desire of promoting laughter at any rate, and a contempt of his superiors. And he sums up the whole very strongly, by saying that Thersites hated Achilles and Ulysses ; in which, as Plutarch has remarked in his treatise of envy and hatred, he makes it the utmost completion of an ill character to bear a malevolence to the best men. What is farther observable is, that Thersites is never heard of after this his first appearance : such a scandalous character is to be taken no more notice of, than just to show that it is despised. Homer has observed the same conduct with regard to the most *deformed* and most *beautiful* person of his poem : for Nireus is thus mentioned once and no more throughout the *Iliad*. He places a worthless *beauty* and an ill-natured *wit* upon the same foot, and shows that the gifts of the body without those of the mind are not more despicable, than those of the mind itself without virtue. P.

With witty malice studious to defame ;  
Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim. 260  
But chief he gloried with licentious style  
To lash the great, and monarchs to revile.  
His figure such as might his soul proclaim ;  
One eye was blinking, and one leg was lame :  
His mountain-shoulders half his breast o'erspread, 265  
Thin hairs bestrew'd his long mis-shapen head.  
Spleen to mankind his envious heart possest,  
And much he hated all, but most the best.  
Ulysses or Achilles still his theme :  
But royal scandal his delight supreme. 270  
Long had he lived the scorn of every Greek,  
Vex'd when he spoke, yet still they heard him  
speak.

Sharp was his voice ; which in the shrillest tone,  
Thus with injurious taunts attack'd the throne.

Amidst the glories of so bright a reign, 275  
What moves the great Atrides to complain ?  
'Tis thine whate'er the warrior's breast inflames,  
The golden spoil, and thine the lovely dames.  
With all the wealth our wars and blood bestow,  
Thy tents are crowded, and thy chests o'erflow. 280  
Thus at full ease in heaps of riches roll'd,  
What grieves the monarch ? Is it thirst of gold ?  
Say, shall we march with our unconquer'd powers,  
(The Greeks and I) to Ilion's hostile towers,  
And bring the race of royal bastards here, 285  
For Troy to ransom at a price too dear ?  
But safer plunder thy own host supplies ;  
Say, would'st thou seize some valiant leader's prize ?



Or, if thy heart to generous love be led,  
 Some captive fair, to bless thy kingly bed? 290  
 Whate'er our master craves, submit we must,  
 Plagued with his pride, or punish'd for his lust.  
 Oh women of Achaia! men no more!  
 Hence let us fly, and let him waste his store  
 In loves and pleasures on the Phrygian shore. 295 }  
 We may be wanted on some busy day,  
 When Hector comes: so great Achilles may:  
 From him he forced the prize we jointly gave,  
 From him, the fierce, the fearless, and the brave:  
 And durst he, as he ought, resent that wrong, 300  
 This mighty tyrant were no tyrant long.

Fierce from his seat at this Ulysses springs,  
 In generous vengeance of the king of kings;  
 With indignation sparkling in his eyes,  
 He views the wretch, and sternly thus replies. 305

Peace, factious monster, born to vex the state,  
 With wrangling talents, form'd for foul debate:  
 Curb that impetuous tongue, nor rashly vain  
 And singly mad, asperse the sovereign reign.  
 Have we not known thee, slave! of all our host, 310  
 The man who acts the least, upbraids the most?  
 Think not the Greeks to shameful flight to bring,  
 Nor let those lips profane the name of king.

Ver. 291.] He disguises his author. Thus Travers, with more fidelity:

Is this the care that kings their warriors owe,  
 To feast their riot by the public woe? W.

Ver. 298.] He might easily have kept up to the spirit of his original:

From him *more* fierce, *more* fearless, and *more* brave. W.

For our return we trust the heavenly powers ;  
 Be that their care ; to fight like men be ours. 315  
 But grant the host with wealth the general load,  
 Except detraction, what has thou bestow'd ?  
 Suppose some hero should his spoils resign,  
 Art thou that hero, could those spoils be thine ?  
 Gods ! let me perish on this hateful shore, 320  
 And let these eyes behold my son no more,  
 If, on thy next offence, this hand forbear  
 To strip those arms thou ill deservest to wear,  
 Expel the council where our princes meet,  
 And send thee scourged, and howling through the fleet.  
 He said, and cowering as the dastard bends, 326  
 The weighty sceptre on his back descends :  
 On the round bunch the bloody tumours rise ;  
 The tears spring starting from his haggard eyes :  
 Trembling he sat, and shrunk in abject fears, 330  
 From his vile visage wiped the scalding tears.  
 While to his neighbour each express'd his thought :  
 Ye Gods ! what wonders has Ulysses wrought !

Ver. 321.] Travers, more faithfully, but ambiguously :

Nor grant my warlike son to call me sire.

And Homer says nothing about *arms*. Hear faithful Ogilby:

Let not Ulysses' head these shoulders bear,

Nor yet Telemachus be styl'd my heir,

If thee I naked strip not, strip and whip,

And through the army lash unto thy ship.

I agree with Mr. Cowper's version :

—————And may my son

Prove the begotten of another's sire:

and so the author of the travesty :

Or in his stead behold another,

Got by some rascal on his mother.

W.

Ver. 332.] Our poet has entirely neglected a beautiful and



What fruits his conduct and his courage yield !  
 Great in the council, glorious in the field. 335  
 Generous he rises in the crown's defence,  
 To curb the factious tongue of insolence.  
 Such just examples on offenders shown,  
 Sedition silence, and assert the throne.

'Twas thus the general voice the hero prais'd,  
 Who rising, high the' imperial sceptre rais'd : 341  
 The blue-eyed Pallas, his celestial friend,  
 (In form a herald) bade the crowds attend.  
 The' expecting crowds in still attention hung,  
 To hear the wisdom of his heavenly tongue. 345  
 Then deeply thoughtful, pausing ere he spoke,  
 His silence thus the prudent hero broke.

Unhappy monarch ! whom the Grecian race  
 With shame deserting, heap with vile disgrace,  
 Not such at Argos was their generous vow, 350  
 Once all their voice, but ah ! forgotten now :  
 Ne'er to return, was then the common cry,  
 'Till Troy's proud structures should in ashes lie.  
 Behold them weeping for their native shore !  
 What could their wives or helpless children  
 more ? 355

descriptive verse of his original, thus represented with great neatness by Mr. Cowper :

—It was no time

For mirth, yet mirth illumined every face :

And laughing thus they spake.

W.

Ver. 338.] This is elegant, but weakens the original by losing a particular application in a general maxim. Mr. Cowper is, as at all times, faithful:

The valiant talker shall not soon, we judge,

Take liberties with royal names again.

W.

What heart but melts to leave the tender train,  
 And, one short month, endure the wintry main ?  
 Few leagues removed, we wish our peaceful seat,  
 When the ship tosses, and the tempests beat :  
 Then well may this long stay provoke their tears,  
 The tedious length of nine revolving years. 361  
 Not for their grief the Grecian host I blame ;  
 But vanquish'd ! baffled ! oh eternal shame !  
 Expect the time to Troy's destruction given,  
 And try the faith of Calchas and of heaven. 365  
 What past at Aulis, Greece can witness bear,  
 And all who live to breathe this Phrygian air.  
 Beside a fountain's sacred brink we rais'd  
 Our verdant altars, and the victims blaz'd ;  
 ('Twas where the plane-tree spread its shades around)  
 The altars heav'd ; and from the crumbling ground 371  
 A mighty dragon shot, of dire portent ;  
 From Jove himself the dreadful sign was sent.

Ver. 360.] Homer has nothing about *tears*, but about *weariness* and  *vexation*. Thus Mr. Travers :

Then well may Greece require her native soil,  
 Spent with nine years of unsuccessful toil. W.

Ver. 363.] His original says exactly,

—————and yet 'tis base  
 So long to stay, and empty to return. W.

Ver. 366.] He drops some thoughts of his original, thus preserved by Travers :

How, when at Aulis, big with future woes  
 To Priam's race, combin'd his Grecian foes. W.

Ver. 370.] Hobbes and Cowper have expressed all their author : of whom the latter thus elegantly :

—————We beside the fount  
 With perfect hecatombs the Gods adored  
 Beneath the plane-tree, from whose root a stream  
 Ran crystal-clear. W.



Straight to the tree his sanguine spires he roll'd,  
And curl'd around in many a winding fold. 375  
The topmast branch a mother-bird possest ;  
Eight callow infants fill'd the mossy nest ;  
Herself the ninth ; the serpent as he hung  
Stretch'd his black jaws, and crash'd the crying  
    young ;  
While hovering near, with miserable moan, 380  
The drooping mother wail'd her children gone.  
The mother last, as round the nest she flew,  
Seized by the beating wing, the monster slew :  
Nor long survived ; to marble turn'd he stands  
A lasting prodigy on Aulis' sands. 385  
Such was the will of Jove ; and hence we dare  
Trust in his omen, and support the war.  
For while around we gaze with wondering eyes,  
And trembling sought the powers with sacrifice,  
Full of his God, the reverend Calchas cried, 390  
Ye Grecian warriors ! lay your fears aside.  
This wonderous signal Jove himself displays,  
Of long, long labours, but eternal praise.  
As many birds as by the snake were slain,  
So many years the toils of Greece remain ; 395  
But wait the tenth, for Ilion's fall decreed :  
Thus spoke the prophet, thus the Fates succeed.

Ver. 386 & 387.] Two unnecessary verses of his own invention. W.

Ver. 394.] The simplicity of the original is lost in the brevity of the translation. Mr. Cowper, as Chapman before him, has succeeded much better :

Even as this serpent in your sight devour'd  
Eight youngling sparrows, with their dam, the ninth ;  
So we nine years must war on yonder plain. W.

Obey, ye Grecians ! with submission wait,  
Nor let your flight avert the Trojan fate. 399

He said : the shores with loud applauses sound,  
The hollow ships each deafening shout rebound.  
Then Nestor thus—These vain debates forbear,  
Ye talk like children, not like heroes dare.

Where now are all your high resolves at last ? 404  
Your leagues concluded, your engagements past ?  
Vow'd with libations and with victims then.

Now vanish'd like their smoke : the faith of men !  
While useless words consume the' unactive hours,  
No wonder Troy so long resists our powers.

Rise, great Atrides ! and with courage sway ; 410  
We march to war if thou direct the way.

But leave the few that dare resist thy laws,  
The mean deserters of the Grecian cause,  
To grudge the conquests mighty Jove prepares,  
And view, with envy, our successful wars. 415

On that great day when first the martial train,  
Big with the fate of Ilion, plow'd the main,  
Jove, on the right, a prosperous signal sent,  
And thunder rolling shook the firmament.

Encourag'd hence, maintain the glorious strife, 420  
'Till every soldier grasp a Phrygian wife.

'Till Helen's woes at full reveng'd appear,  
And Troy's proud matrons render tear for tear.  
Before that day, if any Greek invite

His country's troops to base, inglorious flight ; 425

Ver. 425.] Mr. Cowper has best preserved the spirit of his author.

—————What soldier languishes and sighs  
To leave us ? Let him dare to lay his hand  
On his own vessel, and he dies the first.

W.



Stand forth that Greek ! and hoist his sail to fly,  
And die the dastard first, who dreads to die.  
But now, O monarch ! all thy chiefs advise :  
Nor what they offer, thou thyself despise.  
Among those counsels, let not mine be vain ; 430  
In tribes and nations to divide thy train :  
His separate troops let every leader call,  
Each strengthen each, and all encourage all.  
What chief, or soldier, of the numerous band,  
Or bravely fights, or ill obeys command, 435  
When thus distinct they war, shall soon be known,  
And what the cause of Ilium not o'erthrown ;  
If fate resists, or if our arms are slow,  
If Gods above prevent, or men below.

To him the king : how much thy years excel 440  
In arts of council, and in speaking well !  
O would the Gods, in love to Greecé, decree,  
But ten such sages as they grant in thee ;  
Such wisdom soon should Priam's force destroy,  
And soon should fall the haughty towers of Troy !  
But Jove forbids, who plunges those he hates 446  
In fierce contention and in vain debates.  
Now great Achilles from our aid withdraws,  
By me provok'd ; a captive maid the cause :  
If e'er as friends we join, the Trojan wall 450  
Must shake, and heavy will the vengeance fall !  
But now, ye warriors, take a short repast ;  
And, well-refresh'd, to bloody conflict haste.  
His sharpen'd spear let every Grecian wield,  
And every Grecian fix his brazen shield ; 455

Let all excite the fiery steeds of war,  
 And all for combat fit the rattling car.  
 This day, this dreadful day, let each contend;  
 No rest, no respite, 'till the shades descend:  
 'Till darkness, or 'till death, shall cover all; 460  
 Let the war bleed, and let the mighty fall!  
 'Till bath'd in sweat be every manly breast,  
 With the huge shield each brawny arm deprest,  
 Each aching nerve refuse the lance to throw,  
 And each spent courser at the chariot blow. 465  
 Who dares, inglorious, in his ships to stay,  
 Who dares to tremble on this signal day;  
 That wretch, too mean to fall by martial power,  
 The birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.  
 The monarch spoke; and strait a murmur rose,  
 Loud as the surges when the tempest blows, 471  
 That dash'd on broken rocks tumultuous roar,  
 And foam and thunder on the stony shore.

Ver. 463.] An addition of his own, which appears to advantage in such a noble and animated passage. Mr. Cowper also is excellent, as well as faithful:

————— Every buckler's thong  
 Shall sweat on the toil'd bosom; every hand,  
 That shakes the spear, shall ache, and every steed  
 Shall smoke, that whirls the chariot o'er the plain. W.

Ver. 470.] This is grand poetry, but not Homer; to whom Chapman keeps closest of the old translators; and Mr. Cowper is still more observant of his author. The following attempt is accurately faithful:

He spake; the legions shouted, like a wave  
 On a high shore, dash'd by the boisterous south  
 Against a cliff projecting, which the swell  
 Incessant beats, from every wind that blows. W.



Strait to the tents the troops dispersing bend,  
 The fires are kindled, and the smokes ascend ; 475  
 With hasty feasts they sacrifice, and pray  
 To' avert the dangers of the doubtful day.  
 A steer of five years age, large-limb'd and fed,  
 To Jove's high altars Agamemnon led :  
 There bade the noblest of the Grecian peers ; 480  
 And Nestor first, as most advanc'd in years.  
 Next came Idomeneus, and Tydeus' son,  
 Ajax the less, and Ajax Telamon ;  
 Then wise Ulysses in his rank was plac'd ;  
 And Menelaüs came unbid, the last. 485  
 The chiefs surround the destined beast, and take  
 The sacred offering of the salted cake :  
 When thus the king prefers his solemn prayer,  
 Oh thou ! whose thunder rends the clouded air,  
 Who in the heaven of heavens hast fix'd thy throne,  
 Supreme of Gods ! unbounded and alone ! 491  
 Hear ! and before the burning sun descends,  
 Before the night her gloomy veil extends,  
 Low in the dust be laid yon' hostile spires,  
 Be Priam's palace sunk in Grecian fires, 495  
 In Hector's breast be plung'd this shining sword,  
 And slaughter'd heroes groan around their Lord !  
 Thus pray'd the chief : his unavailing prayer  
 Great Jove refused, and tost in empty air :

Ver. 476.] His original required,

*Each to his God, they sacrifice and pray.*

W.

Ver. 496.] Our poet is too concise : Travers is more successful, who has uniformly profited both from the excellencies and defects of his predecessor.

The God averse, while yet the fumes arose, 500  
 Prepared new toils, and doubled woes on woes.  
 Their prayers perform'd, the chiefs their rites pursue,  
 The barley sprinkled, and the victim slew.  
 The limbs they sever from the' inclosing hide,  
 The thighs, selected to the Gods, divide. 505  
 On these, in double cauls involv'd with art,  
 The choicest morsels lie from every part.  
 From the cleft wood the crackling flames aspire,  
 While the fat victims feed the sacred fire.  
 The thighs thus sacrific'd, and entrails drest, 510  
 The' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest ;  
 Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,  
 Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.  
 Soon as the rage of hunger was supprest,  
 The generous Nestor thus the prince address. 515  
 Now bid thy heralds sound the loud alarms,  
 And call the squadrons sheath'd in brazen arms :

Let Hector's arms no more the chief befriend ;  
 Fierce through his corslet may this sword descend :  
 Prone at his feet with many a fatal wound  
 Let his grim warriors bite the dusty ground. W.

Ver. 500.] Our poet disguises a circumstance, which is well represented by Travers :

Thus, but in vain, the suppliant monarch strove  
 To melt the heart of unrelenting Jove ;  
*Though grateful were the rites, the god decreed*  
 That woes unnumber'd should on woes succeed. W.

Ver. 516.] The translator passes over *three* entire verses of his master, which Mr. Cowper has executed very commendably ; and I shall attempt myself :

Illustrious son of Atreus, king of men !  
 Debate we here no longer, nor delay  
 To execute whate'er great Jove ordains. W.



Now seize the' occasion, now the troops survey,  
And lead to war when Heaven directs the way.

He said; the monarch issued his commands; 520  
Strait the loud heralds call the gathering bands.  
The chiefs inclose their King; the hosts divide,  
In tribes and nations rank'd on either side.  
High in the midst the blue-eyed virgin flies;  
From rank to rank she darts her ardent eyes: 525  
The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal shield,  
Blazed on her arm, and lighten'd all the field:

Ver. 525.] Our translator was mindful of Milton here, Par.  
Lost, i. 567:

—————He through the armed files  
*Darts his experienc'd eye*, and soon traverse  
The whole battalion views, their order due:

for this noble verse is a rapturous effusion of his own; and his enthusiasm has thrown a glorious lustre on other parts of the passage, unborrowed from his author: and let general excellence atone, if it can atone, for the addition of some circumstances and the suppression of others. The unauthorized appendage of *serpents* in ver. 528, mentioned in his own note, might be first suggested by Chapman. And all the translators concur in mistaking the *Ægis* for a *shield*: that it was a *breast-plate* appears sufficiently from Iliad, v. 909. and I have proved abundantly in my notes on verses 1015, 1443, of the *Ion* of Euripides.

The following version is literal:

With them the blue-eyed maid her Ægis held

Precious, not subject to decay, or death:

Dacier's "la redoutable Egide," supplied our translator with his *epithet*. W.

Ver. 526. *The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal shield.*] Homer does not expressly call it a shield in this place, but it is plain from several other passages that it was so. In the fifth Iliad, this Ægis is described with a sublimity that is inexpressible. The figure of the Gorgon's head upon it is there specified, which will justify the mention of the serpents in the translation here: the verses are remarkably sonorous in the original. P.

Round the vast orb a hundred serpents roll'd,  
Form'd the bright fringe, and seem'd to burn in gold.  
With this each Grecian's manly breast she warms,  
Swells their bold hearts, and strings their nervous  
arms : 531

No more they sigh, inglorious to return,  
But breathe revenge, and for the combat burn.

As on some mountain, through the lofty grove,  
The crackling flames ascend, and blaze above ; 535  
The fires expanding, as the winds arise,  
Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the skies :  
So from the polish'd arms, and brazen shields,  
A gleamy splendor flash'd along the fields.  
Not less their number than the' embodied cranes,  
Or milk-white swans in Asius' watery plains, 541  
That o'er the windings of Caÿster's springs,  
Stretch their long necks, and clap their rustling wings ;  
Now tower aloft, and course in airy rounds ;  
Now light with noise ; with noise the field resounds.  
Thus numerous and confused, extending wide, 546  
The legions crowd Scamander's flowing side ;  
With rushing troops the plains are cover'd o'er,  
And thundering footsteps shake the sounding shore.  
Along the river's level meads they stand, 550  
Thick as in spring the flowers adorn the land,  
Or leaves the trees ; or thick as insects play,  
The wandering nation of a summer's day.

Ver. 552. *Or thick as insects play.*] This simile translated literally runs thus: *As the numerous troops of flies about a shepherd's cottage in spring, when the milk moistens the pails ; such numbers of Greeks stood in the field against the Trojans, desiring their de-*



That drawn by milky steams, at evening hours,  
 In gather'd swarms surround the rural bowers; 555  
 From pail to pail with busy murmur run  
 The gilded legions, glittering in the sun.  
 So throng'd, so close, the Grecian squadrons stood  
 In radiant arms, and thirst for Trojan blood.  
 Each leader now his scatter'd force conjoins, 560  
 In close array, and forms the deepening lines.

*struction.* The lowness of this image, in comparison with those which precede it, will naturally shock a modern critick, and would scarce be forgiven in a poet of these times. The utmost a translator can do is to heighten the expression, so as to render the disparity less observable; which is endeavoured here, and in other places. If this be done successfully, the reader is so far from being offended at a low idea, that it raises his surprise to find it grown great in the poet's hands, of which we have frequent instances in Virgil's Georgicks. Here follows another of the same kind, in the simile of Agamemnon to a bull, just after he has been compared to Jove, Mars, and Neptune. This, Eustathius tells us, was blamed by some criticks, and Mr. Hobbes has left it out in his translation. The liberty has been taken here to place the humbler simile first, reserving the noble one as a more magnificent close of the description: the bare turning the sentence removes the objection. Milton, who was a close imitator of our author, has often copied him in these humble comparisons. He has not scrupled to insert one in the midst of that pompous description of the rout of the rebel angels in the sixth book, where the Son of God in all his dreadful Majesty is represented pouring his vengeance upon them:

—As a herd

Of goats, or timorous flocks together throng'd,

Drove them before him thunder-struck.

P.

Ver. 556.] A beautiful couplet of his own, sufficiently accounted for by our poet in his note on the passage. We must regret, however, that he does not seem to have relished in a manner, that might have been expected from his taste and genius, the simplicity of his original. Hence once circumstance, which confers the highest value on Homer, scarcely appears in his translator; a delineation of the manners, individual and political, of antiquity. W.

Not with more ease, the skilful shepherd swain  
 Collects his flocks from thousands on the plain.  
 The King of Kings, majestically tall,  
 Towers o'er his armies, and outshines them all : 565  
 Like some proud bull that round the pastures leads  
 His subject-herds, the monarch of the meads.  
 Great as the Gods, the' exalted chief was seen,  
 His strength like Neptune, and like Mars his mien ;  
 Jove o'er his eyes celestial glories spread, 570  
 And dawning conquest play'd around his head.

Say, Virgins, seated round the throne divine,  
 All-knowing goddesses ! immortal nine !  
 Since earth's wide regions, heaven's unmeasured  
 height,  
 And hell's abyss, hide nothing from your sight, 575  
 (We, wretched mortals ! lost in doubts below,  
 But guess by rumour, and but boast we know)  
 Oh say what heroes, fired by thirst of fame,  
 Or urged by wrongs, to Troy's destruction came !  
 To count them all, demands a thousand tongues, 580  
 A throat of brass, and adamantine lungs.

Ver. 570.] Here again his own enthusiasm, kindling with his author, carried him away from the direct road of imitation, into a magnificent region of original beauty. That sublime imagery in Lee's Alexander might cross his memory on this occasion :

When Glory, like the conquering eagle, stood  
 Perch'd on my beaver in the Granic flood.

But his principal attention was fixed on Cowley, David. iv. 863.

Bright signs through all your words and looks are *spread*,  
 A rising *victory dawns around your head*.

Hobbes is literal, whom I quote merely that the English reader may know Homer as he is :

—Like Jove in head and face ;  
 Belted like Mars ; like Neptune's was his breast. W.



Daughters of Jove, assist ! inspired by you  
 The mighty labour dauntless I pursue :  
 What crowded armies, from what climes they bring,  
 Their names, their numbers, and their chiefs I  
 sing. 585

### THE CATALOGUE OF THE SHIPS.

THE hardy warriors whom Bœotia bred,  
 Peneleus, Leitus, Prothoënor led :  
 With these Arcesilaus and Clonius stand,  
 Equal in arms, and equal in command.  
 These head the troops that rocky Aulis yields, 590  
 And Eteon's hills, and Hyrie's watery fields,  
 And Schœnus, Scholos, Græa near the main,  
 And Micalessia's ample piny plain.

Ver. 584.] Homer says only,

The naval chiefs and all their ships I sing. W.

Ver. 586. *The hardy warriors.*] The catalogue begins in this place, which I forbear to treat of at present : only I must acknowledge here that the translation has not been exactly punctual to the order in which Homer places his towns. However it has not trespassed against geography ; the transpositions I mention being no other than such minute ones, as Strabo confesses the author himself is not free from. P.

The necessities of rhyme, and a desire of infusing animation into what some would call a heavy catalogue of names, impelled our poet to various insertions of epithets, and additions of minute circumstances, in deviation from his original ; in which he displays inimitable dexterity and taste : but the reader would be wearied and disgusted by a perpetual enumeration of these trivial diversities ; no less than by the notice of some omissions of proper names throughout the catalogue.

The consummate skill, however, and taste, and ingenuity of our unrivalled translator, are no where more conspicuous than in his execution of this arduous portion of his author. W.

Those who in Peteon or Ilesion dwell,  
Or Harma where Apollo's prophet fell ; 595  
Heleon and Hylè, which the springs o'erflow ;  
And Medeon lofty, and Ocalea low ;  
Or in the meads of Haliartus stray,  
Or Thespia sacred to the God of Day.  
Onchestus, Neptune's celebrated groves ; 600  
Copæ, and Thisbè, famed for silver doves,  
For flocks Erythræ, Glissa for the vine ;  
Platea green, and Nisa the divine.  
And they whom Thebè's well-built walls enclose,  
Where Mydè, Eutresis, Coronè rose ; 605  
And Arnè rich, with purple harvests crown'd ;  
And Anthedon, Bœotia's utmost bound.  
Full fifty ships they send, and each conveys  
Twice sixty warriors through the foaming seas.  
To these succeed Aspledon's martial train 610  
Who plow the spacious Orchomenian plain ;  
Two valiant brothers rule the' undaunted throng,  
Iälmen and Ascalaphus the strong :  
Sons of Astiochè, the heavenly fair,  
Whose virgin charms subdued the God of War : 615  
(In Actor's court as she retired to rest,  
The strength of Mars the blushing maid comprest)  
Their troops in thirty sable vessels sweep  
With equal oars the hoarse-resounding deep.  
The Phocians next in forty barks repair, 620  
Epistrophus and Schedius head the war.  
From those rich regions where Cephissus leads  
His silver current through the flowery meads ;  
From Panopëa, Chrysa the divine,  
Where Anemoria's stately turrets shine, 625



Where Pytho, Daulis, Cyparissus stood,  
 And fair Lilæa views the rising flood.  
 These, ranged in order on the floating tide,  
 Close, on the left, the bold Bœotians' side.

Fierce Ajax led the Locrian squadrons on, 630  
 Ajax the less, Oïleus' valiant son ;  
 Skill'd to direct the flying dart aright ;  
 Swift in pursuit, and active in the fight.  
 Him, as their chief, the chosen troops attend,  
 Which Bessa, Thronus, and rich Cynos send : 635  
 Opus, Calliarus, and Scarphè's bands :  
 And those who dwell where pleasing Augia stands,  
 And where Boägrïus floats the lowly lands,  
 Or in fair Tarphe's sylvan seats reside ;  
 In forty vessels cut the yielding tide. 640

Eubœa next her martial sons prepares,  
 And sends the brave Abantes to the wars :  
 Breathing revenge, in arms they take their way  
 From Chalcis' walls, and strong Eretria ;  
 The' Isteian fields for generous vines renown'd, 645  
 The fair Caristos, and the Styrian ground ;  
 Where Dios from her towers o'erlooks the plain,  
 And high Cerinthus views the neighbouring main.

Ver. 630.] Our poet here, by some unintentional omission, I should think, has entirely lost sight of Homer. Thus Travers, with more fidelity :

The troops of Locris were by Ajax led ;  
 He, from whose arm the lance unerring fled ;  
 He, whom the queen of great Oïleus bore ;  
 Who on his breast the linen corslet wore :  
 In stature less, but swifter in the field,  
 Than him who bears the Telamonian shield.

W.

Down their broad shoulders falls a length of hair ;  
 Their hands dismiss not the long lance in air ; 650  
 But with protending spears in fighting fields,  
 Pierce the rough corslets and the brazen shields.  
 Twice twenty ships transport the warlike bands,  
 Which bold Elphenor, fierce in arms, commands.

Full fifty more from Athens stem the main, 655  
 Led by Menestheus through the liquid plain,  
 (Athens the fair, where great Erectheus sway'd,  
 That owed his nurture to the blue-eyed maid,  
 But from the teeming furrow took his birth,  
 The mighty offspring of the foodful earth. 660  
 Him Pallas placed amidst her wealthy fane,  
 Adored with sacrifice and oxen slain ;  
 Where as the years revolve, her altars blaze,  
 And all the tribes resound the Goddess' praise)  
 No chief like thee, Menestheus ! Greece could  
 yield 665

To marshal armies in the dusty field,  
 The' extended wings of battle to display,  
 Or close the' embodied host in firm array.  
 Nestor alone, improved by length of days,  
 For martial conduct bore an equal praise. 670

With these appear the Salaminian bands,  
 Whom the gigantic Telamon commands ;

Ver. 649. *Down their broad shoulders, &c.*] The Greek has it *ἀπὸθεν κομόωντες à tergo comantes*. It was the custom of these people to shave the fore-part of their heads, which they did that their enemies might not take the advantage of seizing them by the hair : the hinder-part they let grow, as a valiant race that would never turn their backs. Their manner of fighting was hand to hand, without quitting their javelins (in the manner of our pikemen). P.



In twelve black ships to Troy they steer their course,  
And with the great Athenians join their force.

Next move to war the generous Argive train 675 }  
From high Trœzenè, and Maseta's plain,  
And fair Ægina circled by the main :  
Whom strong Tyrinthè's lofty walls surround,  
And Epidaure with viny harvests crown'd :  
And where fair Asinen and Hermion show 680  
Their cliffs above, and ample bay below.  
These by the brave Euryalus were led,  
Great Sthenelus, and greater Diomed,  
But chief Tydides bore the sovereign sway ;  
In four score barks they plow the watery way. 685

The proud Mycenè arms her martial powers,  
Cleonè, Corinth, with imperial towers,  
Fair Aræthyrea, Ornia's fruitful plain,  
And Ægion, and Adrastus' ancient reign ;  
And those who dwell along the sandy shore, 690  
And where Pellenè yields her fleecy store,  
Where Helicè and Hyperesia lie,  
And Gonoëssa's spires salute the sky.  
Great Agamemnon rules the numerous band,  
A hundred vessels in long order stand, 695 }  
And crowded nations wait his dread command.  
High on the deck the king of men appears,  
And his refulgent arms in triumph wears ;

Ver. 697.] He misrepresents the original in this place. Homer is not speaking of his appearance in his ship, but as he appeared on the present occasion at the head of his people prepared for battle. The following attempt is literal, and commensurate with the Greek :

Proud of his host, unrival'd in his reign,  
In silent pomp he moves along the main. 700

His brother follows, and to vengeance warms  
The hardy Spartans, exercised in arms :  
Phares and Brysia's valiant troops, and those  
Whom Lacedæmon's lofty hills inclose :  
Or Messe's towers for silver doves renown'd, 705  
Amyclæ, Laäs, Augia's happy ground.  
And those whom Oetylos' low walls contain,  
And Helos, on the margin of the main :  
These, o'er the bending ocean, Helen's cause  
In sixty ships with Menelaüs draws : 710  
Eager and loud, from man to man he flies,  
Revenge and fury flaming in his eyes ;  
While, vainly fond, in fancy oft he hears  
The fair-one's grief, and sees her falling tears.

In ninety sail, from Pylos' sandy coast, 715  
Nestor the sage conducts his chosen host :  
From Amphigenia's ever-fruitful land ;  
Where Æpy high, and little Pteleon stand ;  
Where beauteous Arenè her structures shows,  
And Thryon's walls Alpheus' streams inclose : 720  
And Dorion, famed for Thamyris' disgrace,  
Superior once of all the tuneful race :

He, clad in glittering brass, exulting went

In proud distinction of superior worth

O'er all the heroes, and more numerous troops. W.

Ver. 711.] This passage, though wanting in strict fidelity, is replete with poetical animation. The original runs literally thus :

He in the midst, with ardent vigour bold,

Exhorts to war, for much he wish'd revenge

For Helen's sorrows and uneasy thoughts. W.

Ver. 721.] The poetry of this description is exquisite indeed ;



'Till vain of mortals' empty praise, he strove  
 To match the seed of cloud-compelling Jove !  
 Too-daring bard ! whose unsuccessful pride 725  
 The' immortal Muses in their art defied.  
 The' avenging Muses of the light of day  
 Deprived his eyes, and snatch'd his voice away ;  
 No more his heavenly voice was heard to sing,  
 His hand no more awaked the silver string. 730

Where under high Cyllenè, crown'd with wood,  
 The shaded tomb of old Æpytus stood :  
 From Ripè, Stratie, Tegea's bordering towns,  
 The Phenean fields, and Orchomenian downs,  
 Where the fat herds in plenteous pasture rove ; 735  
 And Stymphelus with her surrounding grove,  
 Parrhasia, on her snowy cliffs reclin'd,  
 And high Enispè shook by wintry wind,  
 And fair Mantinea's ever-pleasing site ;  
 In sixty sail the' Arcadian bands unite. 740  
 Bold Agapenor, glorious at their head,  
 (Ancæus' son) the mighty squadron led.  
 Their ships, supplied by Agamemnon's care,  
 Through roaring seas the wondering warriors bear ;  
 The first to battle on the' appointed plain, 745  
 But new to all the dangers of the main.

but it's variation from the original may be known by the following attempt ; all unworthy, but with this view, of appearing in competition with strains of such unrivalled excellence.

Where Thracian Thamyris the Muses met  
 Returning from Oechalian Eurytus,  
 And stopt his tuneful voice. The daughters he  
 Boastful defied of Ægis-bearing Jove,  
 Who smote the bard with blindness ; and at once  
 Oblivion seiz'd his lyre and song divine.

W.

Those, where fair Elis and Buprasium join,  
 Whom Hyrmin, here, and Myrsinus confine,  
 And bounded there, where o'er the valleys rose  
 The' Olenian rock ; and where Alisium flows ; 750  
 Beneath four chiefs (a numerous army) came :  
 The strength and glory of the' Epean name.  
 In separate squadrons these their train divide,  
 Each leads ten vessels through the yielding tide.  
 One was Amphimachus, and Thalpius one ; 755  
 (Eurytus' this, and that Teätus' son)  
 Diorea sprung from Amarynceus' line ;  
 And great Polyxenus, of force divine.

But those who view fair Elis o'er the seas  
 From the blest Islands of the' Echinades, 760  
 In forty vessels under Meges move,  
 Begot by Phyleus the beloved of Jove.  
 To strong Dulichium from his sire he fled,  
 And thence to Troy his hardy warriors led.

Ulysses follow'd through the watery road, 765  
 A chief in wisdom equal to a God.  
 With those whom Cephalenia's isle inclos'd,  
 Or till their fields along the coast oppos'd :

Ver. 746. *New to all the dangers of the main.*] The Arcadians being an inland people were unskilled in navigation, for which reason Agamemnon furnished them with shipping. From hence, and from the last line of the description of the sceptre, where he is said to preside over *many islands*, Thucydides takes occasion to observe that the power of Agamemnon was superior to the rest of the princes of Greece, on account of his naval forces, which had rendered him master of the sea. Thucyd. lib. 1. P.

Ver. 758.] After this our poet drops a verse, thus accurately exhibited by Mr. Cowper :

Son of Agasthenes, Augeia's son.

W.



Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,  
Where high Neritos shakes his waving woods, 770  
Where Ægilipa's rugged sides are seen,  
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green,  
These in twelve galleys with vermilion prores,  
Beneath his conduct sought the Phrygian shores.

Thoas came next, Andræmon's valiant son, 775  
From Pleuron's walls, and chalky Calydon,  
And rough Pylènè, and the' Olenian steep,  
And Chalcis beaten by the rolling deep.  
He led the warriors from the' Ætolian shore,  
For now the sons of Oeneus were no more ! 780  
The glories of the mighty race were fled !  
Oeneus himself, and Meleager dead !  
To Thoas' care now trust the martial train,  
His forty vessels follow through the main.

Next eighty barks the Cretan king commands,  
Of Gnossus, Lyctus, and Gortyna's bands, 786  
And those who dwell where Rhytion's domes arise,  
Or white Lycastus glitters to the skies,  
Or where by Phæstus silver Jordan runs ;  
Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her sons : 790  
These march'd, Idomeneus, beneath thy care,  
And Merion, dreadful as the God of War.

Tlepolemus, the son of Hercules,  
Led nine swift vessels through the foamy seas :

Ver. 789.] This *silver Jordan* is a bold addition to his original ; and where he found it, I am unable to discern. *Strabo* mentions a Grecian river of this name, but I have not discovered one in Crete. W.

From Rhodes with everlasting sunshine bright, 795  
Jalyssus, Lindus, and Camirus white.

His captive mother fierce Alcides bore  
From Ephyr's walls, and Sellè's winding shore,  
Where mighty towns in ruins spread the plain,  
And saw their blooming warriors early slain. 800

The hero, when to manly years he grew,  
Alcides' uncle, old Licymnius, slew ;  
For this, constrain'd to quit his native place,  
And shun the vengeance of the' Herculean race,  
A fleet he built, and with a numerous train, 805  
Of willing exiles, wander'd o'er the main ;  
Where, many seas and many sufferings past,  
On happy Rhodes the chief arrived at last :  
There in three tribes divides his native band,  
And rules them peaceful in a foreign land ; 810  
Increased and prosper'd in their new abodes,  
By mighty Jove, the sire of men and Gods ;  
With joy they saw the growing empire rise,  
And showers of wealth descending from the skies.

Three ships with Nireus sought the Trojan shore,  
Nireus, whom Aglæe to Charopus bore ; 816  
Nireus, in faultless shape and blooming grace,  
The loveliest youth of all the Grecian race ;

Ver. 807.] These *eight* lines are the representatives of *four* in his original : of which, to demonstrate the fertile fancy of our poet, and the magnificent emblazonry of his pencil, to the English reader, I will venture a literal translation :

To Rhodes our exile came, vast woes endur'd :  
There in three tribes they dwelt, belov'd by Jove,  
Jove, universal king ! who stream'd profuse  
His stores of wealth upon them from the skies.

W.



Pelides only match'd his early charms ;  
But few his troops, and small his strength in arms.

Next thirty galleys cleave the liquid plain, 821  
Of those Calydnæ's sea-girt isles contain :  
With them the youth of Nisyrus repair,  
Casus the strong, and Crapathus the fair ;  
Cos, where Eurypylus possest the sway, 825  
'Till great Alcides made the realms obey :  
These Antiphus and bold Phidippus bring,  
Sprung from the God by Thessalus the king.

Now, Muse, recount Pelasgic Argos' powers,  
From Alos, Alopè, and Trechin's towers ; 830  
From Phthia's spacious vales ; and Hella blest  
With female beauty far beyond the rest.  
Full fifty ships beneath Achilles' care,  
The' Achaians, Myrmidons, Hellenians bear ;  
Thessaliâns all, though various in their name ; 835  
The same their nation, and their chief the same.  
But now inglorious, stretch'd along the shore,  
They hear the brazen voice of war no more ;  
No more the foe they face in dire array :  
Close in his fleet the angry leader lay, 840  
Since fair Briseïs from his arms was torn,  
The noblest spoil from sack'd Lyrnessus borne ;

Ver. 824.] One might suppose our poet mistook these for the names of *men*, instead of *places* : and ver. 826 is entirely his own invention. W.

Ver. 831.] A very illiterate mistake for Hellas ; a name transferred afterwards not unfrequently to all Greece. W.

Ver. 835.] A beautiful couplet, but unauthorised by his original. W.

Then, when the chief the Theban walls o'erthrew,  
 And the bold sons of great Evenus slew.  
 There mourned Achilles, plunged in depth of care, 845  
 But soon to rise in slaughter, blood, and war.

To these the youth of Phylacè succeed,  
 Itona, famous for her fleecy breed,  
 And grassy Pteleon deck'd with cheerful greens,  
 The bowers of Ceres, and the sylvan scenes, 850  
 Sweet Pyrrhasus, with blooming flowerets crown'd,  
 And Antron's watery dens, and cavern'd ground.  
 These own'd as chief Protesilas the brave,  
 Who now lay silent in the gloomy grave :  
 The first who boldly touch'd the Trojan shore, 855  
 And dyed a Phrygian lance with Grecian gore ;  
 There lies, far distant from his native plain ;  
 Unfinish'd, his proud palaces remain,  
 And his sad consort beats her breast in vain. }

Ver. 855.] Our translator is much too brief in this passage. The truth was, that the simplicity of Homer's narrative did not suit the majesty of Pope's numbers. Mr. Cowper, however, has done justice upon the whole, to his original, with no common merit ; whom I shall stay to quote on this occasion :

—First he died

Of all the Greeks: for, as he leap'd to land  
 Foremost by far, a Dardan struck him dead.  
 Nor had his troops, though fill'd with deep regret,  
 No leader: them Podarces led, a chief  
 Like Mars in battle, brother of the slain,  
 But younger born; and from Iphiclus sprung,  
 Who sprang from Phylacus the rich in flocks :  
 But him Protesilaüs, as in years,  
 So also in desert of arms excell'd,  
 Heroic; whom his host, although they saw  
 Podarces at their head, still justly mourn'd.

W.



His troops in forty ships Podarces led, 860  
 Iphiclus' son, and brother to the dead :  
 Nor he unworthy to command the host ;  
 Yet still they mourn'd their ancient leader lost.

The men who Glaphyra's fair soil partake,  
 Where hills encircle Bœbè's lowly lake, 865  
 Where Pheræ hears the neighbouring waters fall,  
 Or proud Iölcus lifts her airy wall,  
 In ten black ships embark'd for Ilion's shore,  
 With bold Eumelus, whom Alcestè bore :  
 All Pelias' race Alcestè far outshin'd, 870  
 The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.

The troops Methonè, or Thaumacia yields,  
 Olizon's rocks, or Melibœa's fields,  
 With Philoctetes sail'd, whose matchless art,  
 From the tough bow directs the feather'd dart. 875  
 Seven were his ships: each vessel fifty row,  
 Skill'd in the science of the dart and bow.  
 But he lay raging on the Lemnian ground,  
 A poisonous Hydra gave the burning wound ;  
 There groan'd the chief in agonizing pain, 880  
 Whom Greece at length shall wish, nor wish in  
 vain.

His forces Medon led from Lemnos' shore,  
 Oïleus son, whom beauteous Rhena bore.

Ver. 871. *The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.*] He gives Alcestis this eulogy of the glory of her sex, for her conjugal piety, who died to preserve the life of her husband Admetus. Euripides has a tragedy on this subject, which abounds in the most masterly strokes of tenderness: in particular the first act, which contains the description of her preparation for death, and of her behaviour in it, can never be enough admired. P.

The' Oechalian race, in those high towers contain'd,

Where once Eurytus in proud triumph reign'd, 885

Or where her humbler turrets Tricca rears,

Or where Ithomè, rough with rocks, appears,

In thirty sail the sparkling waves divide,

Which Podalirius and Machaon guide.

To these his skill their \*parent-God imparts, 890

Divine professors of the healing arts.

The bold Ormenean and Asterian bands

In forty barks Eurypylus commands,

Where Titan hides his hoary head in snow,

And where Hyperia's silver fountains flow. 895

Thy troops, Argissa, Polypœtes leads,

And Eleon, shelter'd by Olympus' shades,

Gyrtonè's warriors, and where Orthè lies,

And Oleöson's chalky cliffs arise.

Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race, 900

The fruit of fair Hippodamè's embrace,

(That day, when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head,

To distant dens the shaggy Centaurs fled)

With Polypœtes join'd in equal sway,

Leonteus leads, and forty ships obey. 905

Ver. 897.] A vicious orthography for Elone, and an imperfect rhyme: nor has Homer one word about Olympus, though this mountain was indeed situated in this neighbourhood. W.

Ver. 904.] A verse of the original is neglected. Mr. Cowper is perfectly faithful, and as elegant as the passage would allow.

—With him was join'd

Leonteus, dauntless warrior, from the bold

Coronus sprung, who Cæneus call'd his sire. W.

\* Æsculapius.



In twenty sail the bold Perhæbians came  
 From Cyphus, Guneus was their leader's name.  
 With these the Enians join'd, and those who freeze,  
 Where cold Dodona lifts her holy trees ;  
 Or where the pleasing Titaresius glides, 910  
 And into Peneus rolls his easy tides ;  
 Yet o'er the silver surface pure they flow,  
 The sacred stream unmix'd with streams below.  
 Sacred and awful ! From the dark abodes  
 Styx pours them forth, the dreadful oath of Gods !

Last under Prothous the Magnesians stood, 916  
 Prothous the swift, of old Tenthredon's blood ;  
 Who dwell where Pelion, crown'd with piny boughs,  
 Obscures the glade, and nods his shaggy brows ;  
 Or where through flowery Tempè Peneus stray'd,  
 ('The region stretch'd beneath his mighty shade) 920  
 In forty sable barks they stemm'd the main ;  
 Such were the chiefs, and such the Grecian train.

Say next, O Muse ! of all Achaia breeds,  
 Who bravest fought, or rein'd the noblest steeds ?

Ver. 925. *Or rein'd the noblest steeds.*] This coupling together of men and horses seems odd enough ; but Homer every where treats these noble animals with remarkable regard. We need not wonder at this enquiry, *which were the best horses ?* from him, who makes his horses of heavenly extraction as well as his heroes : who makes his warriors address them with speeches, and excite them by all those motives which affect a human breast ; who describes them shedding tears of sorrow, and even capable of voice and prophecy : in most of which points Virgil has not scrupled to imitate him. P.

Besides, the management of the horse was characteristic of galantry and spirit among the ancients ; an achievement, that reflected lustre on their heroes. Hence, in Homer, the epithet of *tamer of the steed* is employed as highly honourable even to his most distinguished warriors. W.

Eumelus' mares were foremost in the chase, 926  
 As eagles fleet, and of Pheretian race ;  
 Bred where Pieria's fruitful fountains flow,  
 And train'd by him who bears the silver bow.  
 Fierce in the fight their nostrils breath'd a flame, 930  
 Their height, their colour, and their age the same ;  
 O'er fields of death they whirl the rapid car,  
 And break the ranks, and thunder through the war.  
 Ajax in arms the first renown acquir'd,  
 While stern Achilles in his wrath retir'd : 935  
 (His was the strength that mortal might exceeds,  
 And his, the' unrivall'd race of heavenly steeds)  
 But Thetis' son now shines in arms no more ;  
 His troops, neglected on the sandy shore,  
 In empty air their sportive javelins throw, 940  
 Or whirl the disk, or bend an idle bow :  
 Unstain'd with blood his cover'd chariots stand ;  
 The' immortal coursers graze along the strand :  
 But the brave chiefs the' inglorious life deplor'd,  
 And wandering o'er the camp, required their lord.  
 Now, like a deluge, covering all around, 946  
 The shining armies sweep along the ground ;

Ver. 930.] This is a mere addition, not to be commended. W.

Ver. 938.] Travers more faithfully :

But he for Greece no longer waved the sword,

Fierce in his wrath against her haughty lord. W.

Ver. 943.] The original is unhappily abbreviated here. The following is a literal translation :

The coursers by their several chariots stood,

And lotus with the marsh-bred parsley browz'd. W.

Ver. 944.] This is the true sense of Homer :

Their lords were sauntering round, from battle far,

But wish'd some valiant chief to lead them there. W.



Swift as a flood of fire, when storms arise,  
 Floats the wide field, and blazes to the skies.  
 Earth groan'd beneath them; as when angry Jove  
 Hurls down the forky lightning from above, 951  
 On Arime when he the thunder throws,  
 And fires Typhœus with redoubled blows,  
 Where Typhon, prest beneath the burning load,  
 Still feels the fury of the' avenging God. 955  
 But various Iris, Jove's commands to bear,  
 Speeds on the wings of winds through liquid air;

Ver. 950. *As when angry Jove.*] The comparison preceding this, of a fire which runs through the corn and blazes to heaven, had exprest at once the dazzling of their arms and the swiftness of their march. After which Homer having mentioned the sound of their feet, superadds another simile, which comprehends both the ideas of the brightness and the noise: for here (says Eustathius) the earth appears to *burn* and *groan* at the same time. Indeed the first of these similes is so full and so noble, that it scarce seemed possible to be exceeded by any image drawn from nature. But Homer to raise it yet higher, has gone into the *marvellous*, given a prodigious and supernatural prospect, and brought down Jupiter himself, arrayed in all his terrors, to discharge his lightnings and thunders on Typhœus. The poet breaks out into this description with an air of enthusiasm, which greatly heightens the image in general, while it seems to transport him beyond the limits of an exact comparison. And this daring manner is particular to our author above all the ancients, and to Milton above all the moderns.

Ver. 951.] The mention of *lightning* here, after the preceding simile to that purport, is unauthorised and incongruous. Another object is considered by the author in this place. The following attempt is faithful:

Earth groan'd beneath them, as when thundering Jove,  
 Enraged, in Arime with lash of fire  
 Strikes on Typhœus' subterranean bed:  
 Beneath their trampling feet thus groan'd the ground,  
 As in swift march they scour'd across the plain. W.

In Priam's porch the Trojan chiefs she found,  
 The old consulting, and the youths around.  
 Polites' shape, the monarch's son, she chose, 960  
 Who from Æsetes' tomb observed the foes,  
 High on the mound; from whence in prospect lay  
 The fields, the tents, the navy, and the bay.  
 In this dissembled form, she hastes to bring  
 The' unwelcome message to the Phrygian king. 965  
 Cease to consult, the time for action calls,  
 War, horrid war, approaches to your walls!  
 Assembled armies oft' have I beheld;  
 But ne'er till now such numbers charged a field.  
 Thick as autumnal leaves or driving sand, 970  
 The moving squadrons blacken all the strand.  
 Thou, godlike Hector! all thy force employ,  
 Assemble all the' united bands of Troy;  
 In just array let every leader call  
 The foreign troops: this day demands them all. 975  
 The voice divine the mighty chief alarms;  
 The council breaks, the warriors rush to arms.

Ver. 962.] He would have been more faithful and grammatical had he written:

*Matchless in swiftness*; whence in prospect lay—. W.

Ver. 970.] Homer says merely *like* leaves. W.

Ver. 973.] The original is but little seen in this place. Let the reader accept the following attempt at fidelity:

Priam's great city holds auxiliar bands

In language various as their numerous tribes:

Each separate chief his separate troop command,

And range his squadrons in the marshall'd field. W.

Ver. 976.] This is inaccurate. Travers seems preferable:

The mighty chief the voice celestial knew:

The council rose; to arms the warriors flew. W.



The gates unfolding pour forth all their train,  
Nations on nations fill the dusky plain,  
Men, steeds, and chariots shake the trembling  
ground, 980

The tumult thickens, and the skies resound.  
Amidst the plain in sight of Ilion stands  
A rising mount, the work of human hands,  
(This for Myrinne's tomb the' immortals know,  
Though call'd Bateia in the world below) 985  
Beneath their chiefs in martial order here,  
The' auxiliar troops and Trojan hosts appear.

The godlike Hector, high above the rest,  
Shakes his huge spear, and nods his plummy crest :  
In throngs around his native bands repair, 990  
And groves of lances glitter in the air.

Divine Æneas brings the Dardan race,  
Anchises' son, by Venus' stolen embrace,  
Born in the shades of Ida's secret grove,  
(A mortal mixing with the queen of love) 995  
Archilochus and Acamas divide  
The warrior's toils, and combat by his side.

Who fair Zeleia's wealthy valleys till,  
Fast by the foot of Ida's sacred hill ;  
Or drink, Æsepus, of thy sable flood ; 1000  
Were led by Pandarus, of royal blood.  
To whom his art Apollo deign'd to show,  
Graced with the presents of his shafts and bow.

From rich Apæsus and Adrestia's towers,  
High Tereæ's summits, and Pityea's bowers ; 1005  
From these the congregated troops obey  
Young Amphius and Adrastus' equal sway ;

Old Merops' sons ; whom, skill'd in fates to come,  
 The sire forewarn'd, and prophesied their doom :  
 Fate urged them on ! the sire forewarn'd in vain,  
 They rush'd to war, and perish'd on the plain. 1011

From Practius' stream, Percote's pasture lands,  
 And Sestos and Abydos' neighbouring strands,  
 From great Arisbe's walls and Selle's coast,  
 Asius Hyrtacides conducts his host : 1015  
 High on his car he shakes the flowing reins,  
 His fiery coursers thunder o'er the plains.

The fierce Pelasgi next, in war renown'd,  
 March from Larissa's ever-fertile ground :  
 In equal arms their brother leaders shine, 1020  
 Hippothous bold, and Pyleus the divine.

Next Acamus and Pyrous lead their hosts,  
 In dread array, from Thracia's wintry coasts ;  
 Round the bleak realms where Hellespontus roars,  
 And Boreas beats the hoarse-resounding shores. 1025

With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,  
 Sprung from Trœzenean Ceus, loved by Jove.

Pyræchmes the Pæonian troops attend,  
 Skill'd in the fight their crooked bows to bend ;  
 From Axius' ample bed he leads them on, 1030  
 Axius, that laves the distant Amydon,  
 Axius, that swells with all his neighbouring rills,  
 And wide around the floating region fills.

The Paphlagonians Pylæmenes rules,  
 Where rich Henetia breeds her savage mules, 1035

Ver. 1016.] This animated couplet represents but *three* words  
 of his author :

Huge fire-red coursers.

W.



Where Erythinus' rising cliffs are seen,  
Thy groves of box, Cytorus! ever green;  
And where Ægyalus and Cromna lie,  
And lofty Sesamus invades the sky;  
And where Parthenius, roll'd through banks of  
flowers, 1040

Reflects her bordering palaces and bowers.

Here march'd in arms the Halizonian band,  
Whom Odius and Epistrophus command,  
From those far regions where the sun refines  
The ripening silver in Alybean mines. 1045

There, mighty Chromis led the Mysian train,  
And augur Ennomus, inspired in vain,  
For stern Achilles lopt his sacred head,  
Roll'd down Scamander with the vulgar dead.

Phorcys and brave Ascanius here unite 1050  
The' Ascanian Phrygians, eager for the fight.

Of those who round Mæonia's realms reside,  
Or whom the vales in shades of Tmolus hide,  
Mestles and Antiphus the charge partake;  
Born on the banks of Gyges' silent lake. 1055

There, from the fields where wild Mæander flows,  
High Mycale, and Latmos' shady brows,  
And proud Miletus, came the Carian throngs,  
With mingled clamours, and with barbarous tongues.  
Amphimachus and Naustes guide the train, 1060  
Naustes the bold, Amphimachus the vain,

Ver. 1045.] This notion of the sun's agency is an addition of his own. In the same manner he speaks of *gold* in his *Moral Essays*:

Flam'd forth this rival to its *sire* the *sun*.

W.

Who trick'd with gold, and glittering on his car,  
Rode like a woman to the field of war.

Fool that he was ! by fierce Achilles slain,

The river swept him to the briny main : 1065

There whelm'd with waves the gaudy warrior lies ;

The valiant victor seized the golden prize.

The forces last in fair array succeed,  
Which blameless Glaucus and Sarpedon lead ;

The warlike bands that distant Lycia yields, 1070

Where gulphy Xanthus foams along the fields.

Ver. 1062.] The *car* was made by our translator. Thus Travers :

Who, deckt with gold, and fond of empty pride,

Rode to the combat like a glittering bride.

W.

Ver. 1068.] This elegant conclusion is drawn from *two* lines of his original, which I render thus :

Sarpedon and the blameless Glaucus led

The Lycians, far from Xanthus' gulphy stream.

W.



OBSERVATIONS  
ON  
THE CATALOGUE.

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**I**F we look upon this piece with an eye to ancient learning, it may be observed, that however fabulous the other parts of Homer's poem may be, according to the nature of Epic Poetry, this account of the people, princes, and countries, is purely historical, founded on the real transactions of those times, and by far the most valuable piece of history and geography left us concerning the state of Greece in that early period. Greece was then divided into several dynasties, which our author has enumerated under their respective princes; and this division was looked upon so exact, that we are told of many controversies concerning the boundaries of Grecian cities, which have been decided upon the authority of this piece. Eustathius has collected together the following instances. The city of Calydon was adjudged to the Ætolians, notwithstanding the pretensions of Æolia, because Homer had ranked it among the towns belonging to the former. Sestos was given to those of Abydos, upon the plea that he had said the Abydonians were possessors of Sestos, Abydos and Arisbe. When the Milesians and people of Priene disputed their claim to Mycale, a verse of Homer carried it in favour of the Milesians. And the Athenians were put in possession of Salamis by another which was cited by Solon, or (as some think) interpolated by him for that purpose. Nay in so high estimation has this catalogue been held, that (as Porphyry has written) there have been laws in some nations for the

youth to learn it by heart, and particularly Cerdias (whom Cuperus de Apopth. Homer. takes to be Cercydus, a law-giver of the Megalopolitans) made it one to his countrymen.

But if we consider the catalogue purely as poetical, it will not want its beauties in that light. Rapin, who was none of the most superstitious admirers of our author, reckons it among those parts which had particularly charmed him. We may observe first, what an air of probability is spread over the whole poem by the particularizing of every nation and people concerned in this war. Secondly, what an entertaining scene he presents to us, of so many countries drawn in their liveliest and most natural colours, while we wander along with him amidst a beautiful variety of towns, havens, forests, vineyards, groves, mountains, and rivers; and are perpetually amused with his observations on the different soils, products, situations, or prospects. Thirdly, what a noble review he passes before us of so mighty an army, drawn out in order troop by troop; which, had the number only been told in the gross, had never filled the reader with so great a notion of the importance of the action. Fourthly, the description of the differing arms and manner of fighting of the soldiers, and the various attitudes he has given to the commanders: of the leaders, the greatest part are either the immediate sons of Gods, or the descendants of Gods; and how great an idea must we have of a war, to the waging of which so many Demigods and heroes are assembled? Fifthly, the several artful compliments he paid by this means to his own country in general, and many of his contemporaries in particular, by a celebration of the genealogies, ancient seats, and dominions of the great men of his time. Sixthly, the agreeable mixture of narrations from passages of history or fables, with which he amuses and relieves us at proper intervals. And lastly, the admirable judgment wherewith he introduces this whole catalogue, just at a time when the posture of



affairs in the army rendered such a review of absolute necessity to the Greeks; and in a pause of action, while each was refreshing himself to prepare for the ensuing battles.

Macrobius in his *Saturnalia*, lib. v. cap. 15, has given us a judicious piece of criticism, in the comparison betwixt the catalogues of Homer and Virgil, in which he justly allows the preference to our author, for the following reasons. Homer (says he) has begun his description from the most noted promontory of Greece (he means that of Aulis, where was the narrowest passage to Eubœa). From thence with a regular progress he describes either the maritime or mediterranean towns, as their situations are contiguous: he never passes with sudden leaps from place to place, omitting those which lie between; but, proceeding like a traveller in the way he has begun, constantly returns to the place from whence he digressed, till he finishes the whole circle he designed. Virgil, on the contrary, has observed no order in the regions described in his catalogue, l. x. but is perpetually breaking from the course of the country in a loose and desultory manner. You have Clusium and Cosæ at the beginning, next Populonia and Ilva, then Pisæ, which lie at a vast distance in Etruria; and immediately after Cerete, Pyrgi, and Gravisçæ, places adjacent to Rome: from hence he is snatched to Liguria, then to Mantua. The same negligence is observable in his enumeration of the aids that followed Turnus in l. vii. Macrobius next remarks, that all the persons who are named by Homer in his catalogue are afterwards introduced in his battles, and whenever any others are killed, he mentions only a multitude in general. Whereas Virgil (he continues) has spared himself the labour of that exactness; for not only several whom he mentions in the list are never heard of in the war, but others make a figure in the war, of whom we had no notice in the list. For example, he

specifies a thousand men under Massicus who came from Clusium, l. x. ver. 167. Turnus soon afterwards is in the ship which had carried King Osinius from the same place, l. x. ver. 655. This Osinius was never named before, nor is it probable a king should serve under Massicus. Nor indeed does either Massicus or Osinius ever make their appearance in the battles.—He proceeds to instance several others, who though celebrated for heroes in the catalogue, have no father notice taken of them throughout the poem. In the third place he animadverts upon the confusion of the same names in Virgil: as where Corinæus in the ninth book is killed by Asylas, ver. 571, and Corinæus in the twelfth kills Ebusus, ver. 298. Numa is slain by Nisus, l. ix. ver. 454, and Æneas is afterwards in pursuit of Numa, l. ix. ver. 562. Æneas kills Camertes in the tenth book, ver. 562, and Juturna assumes his shape in the twelfth, ver. 224. He observes the same obscurity in his Patronymics. There is Palinurus Iacides, and Iapix Iacides, Hippocoon Hyrtacides, and Asylas Hyrtacides. On the contrary, the caution of Homer is remarkable, who having two of the name of Ajax, is constantly careful to distinguish them by Oileus or Telamonius, the lesser or the greater Ajax.

I know nothing to be alleged in defence of Virgil in answer to this author, but the common excuse that his Æneis was left unfinished. And upon the whole, these are such trivial slips, as great wits may pass over, and little criticks rejoice at.

But Macrobius has another remark, which one may accuse of evident partiality on the side of Homer. He blames Virgil for having varied the expression in his catalogue, to avoid the repetition of the same words, and prefers the bare and unadorned reiterations of Homer; who begins almost every article the same way, and ends perpetually, *Μέλαιναι νῆες ἔποντο*, &c. Perhaps the best reason to be given for this



had been the artless manner of the first times, when such repetitions were not thought ungraceful. This may appear from several of the like nature in the scripture; as in the twenty-sixth chapter of Numbers, where the tribes of Israel are enumerated in the plains of Moab, and each division recounted in the same words. So in the seventh chapter of the Revelations: *Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand, &c.* But the words of Macrobius are, *Has copias fortasse putat aliquis divinæ illi simplicitati præferendas. Sed nescio quo modo Homerum repetitio illa unicè decet, et est genio antiqui Poëtæ digna.* This is exactly in the spirit, and almost in the cant, of a true modern critick. The *Simplicitas*, the *Nescio quo modo*, the *Genio antiqui Poëtæ digna*, are excellent general phrases for those who have no reasons. *Simplicity* is our word of disguise for a shameful unpoetical neglect of expression: the term of the *Je ne sçay quoy* is the very support of all ignorant pretenders to delicacy; and to lift up our eyes, and to talk of the *Genius of an ancient*, is at once the cheapest way of showing our own taste, and the shortest way of criticising the wit of others our contemporaries.

One may add to the foregoing comparison of these two authors, some reasons for the length of Homer's, and the shortness of Virgil's catalogues. As, that Homer might have a design to settle the geography of his country, there being no description of Greece before his days; which was not the case with Virgil. Homer's concern was to compliment Greece at a time when it was divided into many distinct states, each of which might expect a place in his catalogue: but when all Italy was swallowed up in the sole dominion of Rome, Virgil had only Rome to celebrate. Homer had a numerous army, and was to describe an important war with great and various events, whereas, Virgil's sphere was much more confined. The ships of the Greeks were computed at about one thousand two hundred, those

of Æneas and his aids but at two and forty ; and as the time of the action of both poems is the same, we may suppose the build of their ships, and the number of men they contained, to be much alike. So that if the army of Homer amounts to about a hundred thousand men, that of Virgil cannot be above four thousand. If any one be farther curious to know upon what this computation is founded, he may see it in the following passage of Thucydides, lib. 1. “Homer’s fleet (says he) consisted of one thousand two hundred vessels: those of the Bœotians carried one hundred and twenty men in each, and those of Philoctetes fifty. By these I suppose Homer express the largest and the smallest size of ships, and therefore mentions no other sort. But he tells us of those who sailed with Philoctetes, that they served both as mariners and soldiers, in saying the rowers were all of them archers. From hence the whole number will be seen, if we estimate the ships at a medium between the greatest and the least.” That is to say, at eighty-five men to each vessel (which is the mean between fifty and a hundred and twenty) the total comes to a hundred and two thousand men. Plutarch was therefore in a mistake when he computed the men at a hundred and twenty thousand, which proceeded from his supposing a hundred and twenty in every ship; the contrary to which appears from the above-mentioned ships of Philoctetes, as well as those of Achilles, which are said to carry but fifty men a-piece, in the sixteenth Iliad, ver. 207.

Besides Virgil’s imitation of this catalogue, there has scarce been any Epic writer but has copied after it: which is at least a proof how beautiful this part has been ever esteemed by the finest geniuses in all ages. The catalogues in the ancient Poets are generally known, only I must take notice that the Phocian and Bœotian towns in the fourth Thebaid of Statius are translated from hence. Of the moderns, those who most excel owe their beauty to the imita-



tion of some single particular only of Homer. Thus the chief grace of Tasso's catalogue consists in the description of the heroes, without any thing remarkable on the side of the countries: of the pieces of story he has interwoven, that of Tancred's amour to Clorinda is ill placed, and evidently too long for the rest. Spenser's enumeration of the British and Irish rivers, in the eleventh canto of his fourth book, is one of the noblest in the world; if we consider his subject was more confined, and can excuse his not observing the order or course of the country; but his variety of description, and fruitfulness of imagination, are no where more admirable than in that part. Milton's list of the fallen angels in his first book, is an exact imitation of Homer, as far as regards the digressions of history, and antiquities, and his manner of inserting them: in all else I believe it must be allowed inferior. And indeed what Macrobius has said to cast Virgil below Homer, will fall much more strongly upon all the rest.

I had some cause to fear that this catalogue, which contributed so much to the success of the author, should ruin that of the translator. A mere heap of proper names, though but for a few lines together, could afford little entertainment to an English reader, who probably could not be apprized either of the necessity or beauty of this part of the poem. There were but two things to be done to give it a chance to please him: to render the versification very flowing and musical, and to make the whole appear as much a *landscape* or *piece of painting* as possible. For both of these I had the example of Homer in general; and Virgil, who found the necessity in another age to give more into description, seemed to authorise the latter in particular. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his discourse of the *Structure and disposition of words*, professes to admire nothing more than the harmonious exactness with which Homer has placed these words, and softened the syllables into each other, so as to

derive musick from a crowd of names, which have in themselves no beauty or dignity. I would flatter myself that I have practised this not unsuccessfully in our language, which is more susceptible of all the variety and power of numbers, than any of the modern, and second to none but the Greek and Roman. For the latter point I have ventured to open the prospect a little, by the addition of a few epithets or short hints of description to some of the places mentioned; though seldom exceeding the compass of half a verse (the space in which my author himself generally confines these pictures in miniature). But this has never been done without the best authorities from the ancients, which may be seen under the respective names in the geographical table following.

The table itself I thought but necessary to annex to the map\*, as my warrant for the situations assigned in it to several of the towns. For in whatever maps I have seen to this purpose, many of the places are omitted, or else set down at random. Sophianus and Gerbelius have laboured to settle the geography of old Greece, many of whose mistakes were rectified by Laurenbergius. These however deserved a greater commendation than those who succeeded them; and particularly Sanson's map prefixed to Du Pin's *Bibliothèque Historique*, is miserably defective both in omissions and false placings; which I am obliged to mention, as it pretends to be designed expressly for this catalogue of Homer. I am persuaded the greater part of my readers will have no curiosity this way, however they may allow me the endeavour of gratifying those few who have: the rest are at liberty to pass the two or three following leaves unread.

\* The map, mentioned above, was not deemed of sufficient importance to be engraven anew for this edition.



## GEOGRAPHICAL TABLE

OF THE TOWNS, &amp;c. IN

## HOMER'S CATALOGUE OF GREECE,

*With the Authorities for their Situation.*

BCEOTIA, *under five Captains*, PENELEUS, &c  
*containing,*

**AULIS**, a haven on the Eubœan sea opposite to Chalcis, where the passage to Eubœa is narrowest. Strabo, lib. ix.

Eteon, Homer describes it as a hilly country, and Statius after him—*densamque jugis Eteonen iniquis*. Theb. vii.

Hyrie, a town and lake of the same name, belonging to the territory of Tanagra or Græa. Strab. l. ix.

Schœnus, it lay in the road between Thebes and Anthedon, 50 stadia from Thebes. Strab. Ibid.

Scholos, a town under mount Cytheron. Ibid.

Thespia, near Haliartus, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot. near the Corinthian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Græa, the same with Tanagra, 30 stadia from Aulis, on the Eubœan sea; by this place

the river Asopus falls into that sea. Ibid.

Mycalessus, between Thebes and Chalcis. Paus. Bœot. near Tanagra or Græa. Strab. l. ix. Famous for its pine-trees.—*Pinigeris Mycalessus in Agris*. Statius, l. vii.

Harma, close by Mycalessus. Strab. l. ix. This town as well as the former lay near the road from Thebes to Chalcis. Paus. Bœot. It was here that Amphiaras was swallowed by the earth in his chariot, from whence it received its name. Strab. Ibid.

Ilesion, it was situate in the fens near Heleon and Hyle, not far from Tanagra. These three places took their names from being so seated. (*Ἑλος, Palus*.) Strab. l. ix.

Erythræ, in the confines of Attica near Plataea. Thucyd. l.

iii.—dites pecorum comitantur Erythræ. Stat. Theb. vii.

Peteon, in the way from Thebes to Anthedon. Strab. l. ix.

Ocalea, in the mid-way betwixt Haliartus and Alalcomenes. Ibid.

Medeon, near Onchestus. Ibid.

Copæ, a town on the lake Copais, by the river Cephissus, next Orchomenus. Ibid.

Eutresis, a small town of the Thespians near Thisbe. Ibid.

Thisbè, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot.

Coronea, seated on the Cephissus, where it falls into the lake Copais. Strab. l. ix.

Haliartus, on the same lake, Strab. Ibid. Bordering on Coronea and Plataea. Paus. Bœot.

Plataea, between Citheron and Thebes, divided from the latter by the river Asopus. Strab. l. ix. Viridesque Plataeas. Stat. Th. vii.

Glissa, in the territory of Thebes, abounding with vines. Baccho Glisanta colentes. Stat.

Thebè, situate between the rivers Ismenus and Asopus. Strab. l. ix.

Onchestus, on the lake Copais. The grove consecrated to Neptune in this place, and celebrated by Homer, together with a temple and statue of that God, were shewn in the time of Pausanias. Vide Bœot.

Arnè, seated on the same lake, famous for vines. Strab. Hom.

Midea, on the same lake. Ibid.

Nissa, or Nysa (apud Statium) or according to Strabo, l. ix. Isa; near Anthedon.

Anthedon, a city on the seaside, opposite to Eubœa, the utmost on the shore towards Locris. Strab. l. ix. Teque ultima tractu Anthedon. Statius, l. vii.

Aspledon, 20 stadia from Orchomenus. Strab. l. ix.

Orchomenus, and the plains about it, being the most spacious of all in Bœotia. (Plutarch in Vit. Syllæ, circa medium.)

Homer distinguishes these two last from the rest of Bœotia. They were commanded by Ascalaphus and Ialmen.

PHOCIS, *under* SCHEDIUS *and* EPISTROPHUS,  
*containing,*

Cyparissus, the same with Anticyra according to Pausanias, on the bay of Corinth.

Pytho, adjoining to Parnassus: some think it the same with Delphi. Pausan. Phocic.

Crissa, a sea-town on the bay of Corinth near Cyrrha. Strab. l. ix.

Daulis, upon the Cephissus at the foot of Parnassus. Ibid.

Panopea, upon the same river,

adjoining to Orchomenia, just by Hyampolis or Anemoria. Ibid.

|            |   |                   |
|------------|---|-------------------|
| Hyampolis, | { | both the same ac- |
| Anemoria,  |   | cording to Stra-  |
|            |   | bo. Ibid. Con-    |
|            |   | fining upon Lo-   |
|            |   | cris. Paus. Phoc. |

Lilæa, at the head of the river Cephissus, just on the edge of Phocis. Ib.—propellentemque Lilæam Cephissi glaciale caput. Stat. l. vii.



## LOCRI8, under AJAX OILEUS, containing,

Cynus, a maritime town towards Eubœa. Strab. l. ix.

Opus, a Locrian city, 15 stadia from the sea, adjacent to Panopœa in Phocis. Ib.

Calliarus.

Bessa, so called from being covered with shrubs. Strab. l. ix.

Scarphe, seated between Thronium and Thermopylæ, ten stadia from the sea. Ibid.

Augiæ.

Tarphè.

Thronius, on the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Boagrius, a river that passes by Thronius, and runs into the bay of Oeta, between Cynus and Scarphe. Ibid.

All these opposite to the isle of Eubœa.

## EUBŒA, under ELPHENOR, containing,

Chalcis, the city nearest to the continent of Greece, just opposite to Aulis in Bœotia. Strab. l. x.

Eretria, between Chalcis and Gerestus. Ibid.

Histiæa, a town with vineyards, over-against Thessaly. Herod. l. vii.

Cerinthus, on the sea-shore.

Hom. Near the river Budorus. Strab. l. x.

Dios, seated high. Hom. Near Histicea. Strab. Ib.

Caristos, a city at the foot of the mountain Ocha. Strab. Ib. Between Eretria and Gerestus. Ptolem. l. iii.

Styra, a town near Caristos. Strab. Ibid.

## ATHENS, under MENESTHEUS.

*The Isle of SALAMIS, under AJAX TELAMON.*

## PELOPONNESUS, the East Part divided into ARGIA and

## MYCENÆ, under AGAMEMNON, contains

Argos, 40 stadia from the sea. Paus. Corin.

Tyrinthè, between Argos and Epidaurus. Ibid.

Asinen, Hermion, Trœzene, { Three cities lying in this order on the bay of Hermione, Strab. l. viii. Paus. Corinth. Trœzene was seated high, and Asine a rocky coast. — Altaque Trœzene. Ov. Fast. ii. — Quos Asinæ cautes. Lucan. l. viii.

Eionæ was on the sea-side, for Strabo tells us the people of Mycenæ made it a station for their ships, l. viii.

Epidaurus, a town and little island adjoining, in the inner part of the Saronic bay. Strab. l. viii. It was fruitful in vines in Homer's time.

The isle of Ægina, over-against Epidaurus.

Maseta belongs to the Argolic shore according to Strabo, who observes that Homer names it not in the exact order, placing it with Ægina. Strab. l. viii.

Mycenæ, between Cleone and Argos. Pausan. Strab.

Corinth, near the Isthmus.

Cleone, between Argos and Corinth. Paus. Corinth.

Ornia, on the borders of Sicyonia. Ibid.

Aræthyrea, the same with Phlyasia, at the source of the Achaian Asopus. Strab. l. viii.

Sicyon (anciently the kingdom of Adrastus) betwixt Corinth and Achaia. Paus. Corinth.

Hyperesia, the same with Ægira, says Pausan. Achaic. Seated betwixt Pellene and Helice. Strab. l. viii. Opposite

to Parnassus. Polyb. l. iv.

Gonoëssa, Homer describes it situate very high, and Seneca, Troas. Carens nunquam Gonoëssa vento.

Pellene, bordering on Sicyon and Pheneus, 60 stadia from the sea. Paus. Arcad. Celebrated anciently for its wool. Strab. l. viii. Jul. Pol.

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Ægium,<br>Helice, | { | Next Sicyon lies Pellene, &c. then Helice, and next to Helice, Ægium. Strab. l. viii. Helice lies on the sea side, 40 stadia from Ægium. Paus. Ach. |
|-------------------|---|---|

*The West Part of PELOPONNESUS, divided into LACONIA, MESSENI, ARCADIA, and ELIS.*

*LACONIA, under MENELAUS, containing,*

Sparta, the capital city, on the river Eurotas.

Phares, on the bay of Messenia. Strab. l. viii.

Messa, Strabo thinks this a contraction of Messena, and Statius in his imitation of this catalogue, lib. iv. calls it so.

Brysia, under mount Taygetus. Paus. Lacon.

Augia, the same with Ægiæ in the opinion of Pausanias

(Laconicis) 30 stadia from Gythium.

Amyclæ, 20 stadia from Sparta towards the sea. Ptol. l. iv. under the mountain Taygetus. Strab. l. viii.

Helos, on the sea-side. Hom. Upon the river Eurotas. Strab. Ibid.

Laas.

Oetylos, near the Promontory of Tænarus. Paus. Lac.

*MESSENI, under NESTOR, containing,*

Pylos, the city of Nestor on the sea-shore.

Arenè, seated near the river Minyeius. Hom. Il. xi. Strab. l. viii.

Thryon, on the river Alpheus, the same with Homer elsewhere calls Thryoëssa. Strab. Ibid.

Æpy, the ancient Geogra-

phers differ about the situation of this town, but agree to place it near the sea. Vide Strabo, l. viii.—Summis ingestum montibus Æpy. Stat. l. iv.

Cyparissia, on the borders of Messenia, and upon the bay called from it Cyparissæus. Paus. Messen.

Amphigenia, —Fertilis Am-



phigenia. Stat. Th. iv. near the former. So also, Pteleon, which was built by a colony from Pteleon in Thessaly. Strab. l. viii.

Helos, near the river Alpheus. Ibid.

Dorion, a field or mountain near the sea. Ibid.

ARCADIA, under AGAPENOR, containing,

The mountain Cyllene, the highest of Peloponnesus, on the borders of Achaia and Arcadia near Pheneus. Paus. Arcad. Under this stood the tomb of Æpytus. That monument (the same author tells us) was remaining in his time; it was only a heap of earth, inclosed with a wall of rough stone.

Pheneus, confining on Pelene, and Stymphalus. Ibid.

Orchomenus, confining on Pheneus and Mantinæa. Ibid. Ripe, { These three, Strabo Stratie, { tells us, are not to be Enispè, { found, nor their situ-

{ ation assigned. Lib. viii. prope fin. Enispè stood high, as appears from Hom. and Statius, l. iv. Vento- saque donat Enispè.

Tegea, between Argos and Sparta. Polyb. l. iv.

Mantinæa, bordering upon Tegea, Argia, and Orchomenus. Paus. Arcad.

Stymphalus, confining on Phlyasia or Arethyria. Strab. l. viii.

Parrhasia, adjoining to Laconia. Thucid. l. v.—Parrhasiæque nives. Ovid. Fast. ii.

ELIS, under four Leaders, AMPHIMACHUS, &c. containing,

The city Elis, 120 stadia from the sea. Paus. Eliacis, ii.

Buprasium near Elis. Strab. l. viii.

The places bounded by the fields of Hyrmine, in the territory of Elis, between mount Cyllene and the sea.

Myrsinus, on the sea-side,

70 stadia from Elis, Strab. l. viii.

The Olenian Rocks, which stood near the city Olenos, at the mouth of the river Pierus. Paus. Achaic.

And Alysium, the name of a town or river, in the way from Elis to Pisa. Strab. l. viii,

The ISLES, over against the Continent of ELIS, ACHAIA, or

ACARNANIA.

Echinades and Dulichium, under Meges.

The Cephallenians under Ulysses, being those from Samos (thesame with Cephallenia) from Zacynthus, Crocylia, Ægilipa, Neritus, and Ithaca. This

last is generally supposed to be the largest of these islands on the east side of Cephallenia, and next to it; but that is, according to Wheeler, 20 Italian miles in circumference, whereas Strabo gives Ithaca but 80 stadia

about. It was rather one of the lesser islands towards the mouth of the Achelous.

Homer adds to these places under the dominion of Ulysses, Epirus and the opposite conti-

nent, by which (as M. Dacier observes) cannot be meant Epirus properly so called, which was never subject to Ulysses, but only the sea-coast of Acarnania, opposite to the islands.

*The Continent of ACARNANIA and ÆTOLIA, under THOAS.*

Pleuron, seated between Chalcis and Calydon, by the sea-shore, upon the river Evenus, west of Chalcis. Strab. l. x.

Olynos, lying above Calydon, with the Evenus on the east of it. Ibid.

Pylenè, the same with Proschion, not far from Pleuron,

but more in the land. Strab. l. x.

Chalcis, a sea-town. Hom. Situate on the east-side of the Evenus. Strab. Ibid. There was another Chalcis at the head of the Evenus, called by Strabo Hypo-Chalcis.

Calydon, on the Evenus also. Ibid.

*The Isle of CRETE, under IDOMENEUS, containing,*

Gnossus, seated in the plain between Lyctus and Gortyna, 120 stadia from Lyctus. Strab. l. x.

Gortyna, 90 stadia from the African sea. Ibid.

Lyctus, 80 stadia from the same sea. Ibid.

Miletus,

Phœstus, 60 stadia from

Gortyna, 20 from the sea, under Gortyna. Strab. Ibid. It lay on the river Jardan, as appears by Homer's description of it in the third book of the Odyssey.

Lycastus.

Rhytium, under Gortyna. Strab.

*The Isle of RHODES, under TLEPOLEMUS, containing,*

Lindus, on the right-hand to those who sail from the city of Rhodes, southward. Strab. l. xiv.

Jalyssus, between Camirus and Rhodes. Ibid.

Camirus.

*The Islands, SYMA (under NIREUS) NISYRUS, CARPATHUS, CASUS, COS, CALYDNÆ, under ANTIPHUS and PHIDIPPUS.*

*The Continent of THESSALY, toward the ÆGEAN Sea, under ACHILLES.*

Argos Pelasgicum (the same as Phthiotis). Strabo, l. ix. says that which was since called Phthio- some thought this the name of



a town, others that Homer meant by it this part of Thessaly in general (which last seems most probable). Steph. Byzant observes, there was a city Argos in Thessaly, as well as in Peloponnesus; the former was called Pelasgic, in contradistinction to the Achaian: for though the Pelasgi possessed several parts of Epirus, Crete, Peloponnesus, &c. yet they retained their principal seat in Thessaly. Steph. Byz. in v. Panel.

Alos, { Both on the shore  
Alope, { of Thessaly towards  
          { Locris. Strabo, l. ix.  
          { Alos lies in the pas-  
          { sage of Mount O-  
          { thrys. Ib.

Trechinæ, under the mountain Oeta. Eustath. in Il. ii.

Phthia,  
Hellas,

{ Some supposed these  
two to be names of  
the same place, as  
Strabo says; though  
'tis plain Homer distin-  
guishes them. Whe-  
ther they were cities or  
regions Strabo is not  
determined. lib. ix.

The Hellenes. This denomination, afterwards common to all the Greeks, is here to be understood only of those who inhabited Phthiotis. It was not till long after Homer's time that the people of other cities of Greece, desiring assistance from these, began to have the same name from their communication with them, as Thucydides remarks in the beginning of his first book.

*The following under PROTESILAUS.*

Phylacè, on the coast of Phthiotis, toward the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Pyrhrasus, beyond the mountain Othrys, had the grove of Ceres within two stadia of it. Ibid.

Itona, 60 stadia from Alos; it lay higher in the land than Pyrrhasus, above mount Othrys. Ibid.

Antron, on the sea-side. Hom. In the passage to Eubœa. Ibid.

Pteleon, the situation of this town in Strabo seems to

be between Antron and Pyrrhasus; but Pliny describes it with great exactness to lie on the shore towards Bœotia, on the confines of Phthiotis, upon the river Sperchius; according to which particulars, it must have been seated as I have placed it. Livy also seats it on the Sperchius.

All those towns which were under Protesilaus (says Strabo, lib. ix.) being the five last mentioned, lay on the eastern side of the mountain Othrys.

*These under EUMELUS.*

Pheræ, in the farthest part of Magnesia, confining on mount Pelion. Strab. l. ix. Near the lake of Bœbe. Ptol. And plentifully watered with

the fountains of Hyperia. Strab. Glaphyra.

Iolcos, a sea-town on the Pegasæan bay. Livy, l. iv. and Strab.

*Under PHILOCTETES.*

Methone, a city of Macedonia, 40 stadia from Pydna in Pieria. Strab.

Thaumacia, {  
Melibœa, { In Phthiotis near  
Pharsalus, according to the  
same author. Ib.

Olyzon. It seems that this place lay near Bœbe, Iolcos, and Ormenium, from Strab. l. ix: where he says, Demetrius caused the inhabitants of these towns to remove to Demetrias on the same coast.

*The Upper THESSALY.**The following under PODALIRIUS and MACHAON.*

Trice, or Tricca, not far from the mountain Pindus, on the left-hand of the Peneus, as it runs from Pindus. Strab. lib. ix.

Ithome, near Tricca. Ibid.  
Oechalia, the situation not certain, somewhere near the forementioned towns. Strab. Ibid.

*Under EURYPYLUS.*

Ormenium, under Pelion, on the Pegasæan bay, near Bœbe. Ibid.

Asterium, hard by Phæræ and Titæus. Ibid.

*Under POLYPOETES.*

Argissa, lying upon the river Peneus. Strab. lib. x.

Gyrtone, a city of Perrhæbia, at the foot of Olympus. Ibid.

Orthè, near Peneus and Tempeus. Ibid.

Elone, { Both lying under  
Oloosson, { Olympus, near the  
river Titaresius.  
Ibid.

*Under GUNEUS and PROTHOVS.*

Cyphus, seated in the mountainous country towards Olympus. Ibid.

Dodona, among the mountains, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Titaresius, a river rising in the mountain Titæus, near Olympus, and running into

Peneus. Ibid. It is also called Eurotas.

The river Peneus rises from mount Pindus, and flows through Tempe into the sea. Strab. l. vii. and ix.

Pelion, near Ossa, in Magnesia. Herod. l. vii. P.



# TABLE OF TROY,

AND THE

## AUXILIAR COUNTRIES.

**T**HE kingdom of Priam, divided into eight dynasties.

1. Troas, under Hector, whose capital was Ilium.

2. Dardania, under Æneas, the capital Dardanus.

3. Zeleia, at the foot of Ida, by the Æsepus, under Pandarus.

4. Adrastia, Apæsus, Pityea, mount Tereæ, under Adrastus and Amphius.

5. Sestos, Abydos, Arisbe

on the river Selle, Percote, and Practius, under Asius.

These places lay between Troy and the Propontis.

The other three dynasties were under Mynes, Eetion, and Alteus; the capital of the first was Lyrnessus, of the second Thebe of Cilicia, of the third Pedasus in Lelegia. Homer does not mention these in the catalogue, having been before destroyed and depopulated by the Greeks.

### *The Auxiliar Nations.*

The Pelsagi, under Hippothous and Pyleus, whose capital was Larissa, near the place where Cuma was afterwards built. Strab. l. xiii.

The Thracians, by the side of the Hellespont opposite to Troy, under Acamas and Pyrrhus, and those of Ciconia, under Euphemus.

The Pæonians from Macedonia and the river Axios, under Pyræchmes.

The Paphlagonians, under Pylæmenes. The Halizonians, under Odius and Epistrophus

The Mysians, under Chromis and Ennomus. The Phrygians of Ascania, under Phorcys and Ascanius.

The Mæonians, under Mestles and Antiphus, who inhabited under the mountain Tmolus.

The Carians, under Naustes and Amphimachus, from Miletus, the farthest city of Caria towards the south. Herodot. l. 1.

Mycale, a mountain and promontory opposite to Samos. Ibid.

Pthiron, the same mountain as Latmos, according to Hecataeus.

The Lycians, under Sarpedon and Glaucus, from the banks of

the river Xanthus, which runs into the sea betwixt Rhodes and Cyprus. Homer mentions it to distinguish this Lycia from that which lies on the Propontis.



THE  
THIRD BOOK

OF THE  
I L I A D.

ADDENDUM

1871



## THE ARGUMENT.

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### THE DUEL OF MENELAÛS AND PARIS.

*THE Armies being ready to engage, a single combat is agreed upon between Menelaüs and Paris (by the intervention of Hector) for the determination of the war. Iris is sent to call Helena to behold the fight. She leads her to the walls of Troy, where Priam sat with his counsellors observing the Grecian leaders on the plain below, to whom Helen gives an account of the chief of them. The kings on either part take the solemn oath for the conditions of the combat. The duel ensues, wherein Paris being overcome, is snatched away in a cloud by Venus, and transported to his apartment. She then calls Helen from the walls, and brings the lovers together. Agamemnon, on the part of the Grecians, demands the restoration of Helen, and the performance of the articles.*

*The three and twentieth day still continues throughout this book. The scene is sometimes in the fields before Troy, and sometimes in Troy itself.*

P.

## NOTE PRELIMINARY.

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OF all the books of the *Iliad*, there is scarce any more pleasing than the third. It may be divided into five parts, each of which has a beauty different from the other. The first contains what passed before the two armies, and the proposal of the combat between Paris and Menelaüs: the attention and suspense of these mighty hosts, which were just upon the point of joining battle, and the lofty manner of offering and accepting this important and unexpected challenge, have something in them wonderfully pompous, and of an amusing solemnity. The second part which describes the behaviour of Helena in this juncture, her conference with the old king and his counsellors, with the review of the heroes from the battlements, is an episode entirely of another sort, which excels in the natural and pathetick. The third consists of the ceremonies of the oath on both sides, and the preliminaries to the combat; with the beautiful retreat of Priam, who in the tenderness of a parent withdraws from the sight of the duel: these particulars detain the reader in expectation, and heighten his impatience for the fight itself. The fourth is the description of the duel, an exact piece of painting, where we see every attitude, motion, and action of the combatants particularly and distinctly, and which concludes with a surprising propriety, in the rescue of Paris by Venus. The machine of that Goddess, which makes the fifth part, and whose end is to reconcile Paris and Helena, is admirable in every circumstance: the remonstrance she holds with the Goddess, the reluctance with which she obeys her, the reproaches she casts upon Paris, and the flattery and courtship with which he so soon wins her over to him. Helen (the main cause of this war) was not to be made an odious character; she is drawn by this great master with the finest strokes, as a frail, but not as an abandoned creature. She has perpetual struggles of virtue on the one side, and softnesses which overcome them on the other. Our author has been remarkably careful to tell us this; whenever he but slightly names her in the foregoing part of his work, she is represented at the same time as repentant; and it is thus we see her at large at her first appearance in the present book; which is one of the shortest of the whole *Iliad*, but in recompence has beauties almost in every line, and most of them so obvious, that to acknowledge them we need only to read them. P.



THE  
THIRD BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

---

THUS by their leader's care each martial band  
Moves into ranks, and stretches over the land.  
With shouts the Trojans rushing from afar,  
Proclaim their motions, and provoke the war :

Ver. 3. *With shouts the Trojans.*] The book begins with a fine opposition of the noise of the Trojan army to the silence of the Grecians. It was but natural to imagine this, since the former was composed of many different nations, of various languages, and strangers to each other ; the latter were more united in their neighbourhood, and under leaders of the same country. But as this observation seems particularly insisted upon by our author (for he uses it again in the fourth book, ver. 486.) so he had a farther reason for it. Plutarch, in his treatise of reading the poets, remarks upon this distinction, as a particular credit to the military discipline of the Greeks. And several ancient authors tell us, it was the manner of the Barbarians to encounter with shouts and outcries ; as it continues to this day the custom of the Eastern nations. Perhaps these clamours were only to encourage their men, instead of martial instruments. I think Sir Walter Raleigh says, there never was a people but made use of some sort of musick in battle : Homer never mentions any in the Greek or Trojan armies, and it is scarce to be imagined he would omit a circumstance so poetical without some particular reason.

So when inclement winters vex the plain 5  
With piercing frosts, or thick-descending rain,  
To warmer seas the cranes embodied fly,  
With noise, and order, through the mid-way sky ;  
To Pigmy nations wounds and death they bring,  
And all the war descends upon the wing. 10  
But silent, breathing rage, resolved and skill'd  
By mutual aids to fix a doubtful field,  
Swift march the Greeks : the rapid dust around  
Darkening arises from the labour'd ground.  
Thus from his flaggy wings when Notus sheds 15  
A night of vapours round the mountain-heads,  
Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade,  
To thieves more grateful than the midnight shade ;  
While scarce the swains their feeding flocks survey,  
Lost and confused amidst the thicken'd day : 20  
So wrapt in gathering dust, the Grecian train,  
A moving cloud, swept on, and hid the plain.  
Now front to front the hostile armies stand,  
Eager of fight, and only wait command ;  
When, to the van, before the sons of fame 25  
Whom Troy sent forth, the beauteous Paris came,  
In form a God ! the panther's speckled hide  
Flow'd o'er his armour with an easy pride,  
His bended bow across his shoulders flung,  
His sword beside him negligently hung, 30

Ver. 18.] He has suppressed a simple comparison of his original, which Hobbes does not represent amiss :

As when upon the mountains lies a mist,  
Which to a stone's cast limiteth the eye.

W.



Two pointed spears he shook with gallant grace,  
And dared the bravest of the Grecian race.

As thus, with glorious air and proud disdain,  
He boldly stalk'd, the foremost on the plain,  
Him Menelaüs, loved of Mars, espies, 35  
With heart elated, and with joyful eyes :  
So joys a lion, if the branching deer  
Or mountain goat, his bulky prize, appear ;

Ver. 33.] For these *four* lines his author literally had said :

Him when the warlike Menelaüs view'd

Advancing in the front with lofty step.

W.

Ver. 37. *So joys a lion, if the branching deer, Or mountain goat.*] The old scholiasts refining on this simile, will have it, that Paris is compared to a goat on account of his incontinence, and to a stag for his cowardice : to this last they make an addition which is very ludicrous, that he is also likened to a deer for his *skill in music*, and cite Aristotle to prove that animal delights in harmony, which opinion is alluded to by Mr. Waller in these lines :

Here Love takes stand, and while she charms the ear

Empties his quiver on the listening deer.

But upon the whole, it is whimsical to imagine this comparison consists in any thing more, than the joy which Menelaüs conceived at the sight of his rival, in the hopes of destroying him. It is equally an injustice to Paris, to abuse him for understanding musick, and to represent his retreat as purely the effect of fear, which proceeded from his sense of guilt with respect to the particular person of Menelaüs. He appeared at the head of the army to challenge the boldest of the enemy : nor is his character elsewhere in the Iliad by any means that of a coward. Hector at the end of the sixth book confesses, that no man could justly reproach him as such. Nor is he represented so by Ovid (who copied Homer very closely) in the end of his epistle to Helen. The moral of Homer is much finer : a brave mind, however blinded with passion, is sensible of remorse as soon as the injured object presents itself ; and Paris never behaves himself ill in war, but when his spirits are depressed by the consciousness of an injustice. This also will account for the seeming incongruity of Homer in this passage, who (as they would have us think) paints him a shameful coward, at the same time that he is perpetually calling him *the divine Paris*, and *Paris*

Eager he seizes and devours the slain,  
 Prest by bold youths, and baying dogs in vain. 40  
 Thus fond of vengeance, with a furious bound,  
 In clanging arms he leaps upon the ground  
 From his high chariot : him, approaching near,  
 The beauteous champion views with marks of fear ;  
 Smit with a conscious sense, retires behind, 45  
 And shuns the fate he well deserved to find.  
 As when some shepherd, from the rustling trees,  
 Shot forth to view, a scaly serpent sees ;  
 Trembling and pale, he starts with wild affright,  
 And all confused precipitates his flight : 50  
 So from the King the shining warrior flies,  
 And plunged amid the thickest Trojans lies.

As god-like Hector sees the prince retreat,  
 He thus upbraids him with a generous heat.

*like a God.* What he says immediately afterwards, in answer to Hector's reproof, will make this yet more clear. P.

Ver. 46.] This condemnation of Paris is not in Homer. W.

Ver. 53. *As god-like Hector.*] This is the first place of the poem where Hector makes a figure, and here it seems proper to give an idea of his character, since if he is not the chief hero of the Iliad, he is at least the most amiable. There are several reasons which render Hector a favourite character with every reader, some of which shall here be offered. The chief moral of Homer was to expose the ill effects of discord ; the Greeks were to be shown disunited, and to render that disunion the more probable, he has designedly given them *mixt* characters. The Trojans, on the other hand, were to be represented making all advantages of the others' disagreement, which they could not do without a strict union among themselves. Hector, therefore, who commanded them, must be endued with all such qualifications as tended to the preservation of it ; as Achilles with such as promoted the contrary. The one stands, in contrast to the other, an accomplished character of valour unruffled by rage and anger, and uniting his people by his prudence and example. Hector has also a foil to set him off



Unhappy Paris ! but to women brave ! 55  
 So fairly form'd, and only to deceive !  
 Oh hadst thou died when first thou saw'st the light,  
 Or died at least before thy nuptial rite !  
 A better fate than vainly thus to boast,  
 And fly, the scandal of thy Trojan host. 60  
 Gods ! how the scornful Greeks exult to see  
 Their fears of danger undeceived in thee ;  
 Thy figure promised with a martial air,  
 But ill thy soul supplies a form so fair.  
 In former days, in all thy gallant pride, 65  
 When thy tall ships triumphant stemm'd the tide,

in his own family ; we are perpetually opposing in our own minds the incontinence of Paris, who exposes his country, to the temperance of Hector, who protects it. And indeed it is this love of his country, which appears his principal passion, and the motive of all his actions. He has no other blemish than that he fights in an unjust cause, which Homer has yet been careful to tell us he would not do, if his opinion were followed. But since he cannot prevail, the affection he bears to his parents and kindred, and his desire of defending them, incites him to do his utmost for their safety. We may add, that Homer having so many Greeks to celebrate, makes them shine in their turns, and singly in their several books, one succeeding in the absence of another : whereas Hector appears in every battle the life and soul of his party, and the constant bulwark against every enemy : he stands against Agamemnon's magnanimity, Diomed's bravery, Ajax's strength, and Achilles's fury. There is besides an accidental cause for our liking him, from reading the writers of the Augustan age (especially Virgil) whose favourite he grew more particularly from the time when the Cæsars fancied to derive their pedigree from Troy. P.

Ver. 65.] He has amplified, by animated additions of his own, *four* verses of the original into *eight*. *Travers* is properly compressed :

Was this thy valour, when thy pompous oars  
 Through foreign seas explored the Spartan shores ?

When Greece beheld thy painted canvas flow,  
 And crowds stood wondering at the passing show ;  
 Say, was it thus, with such a baffled mien,  
 You met the' approaches of the Spartan queen, 70  
 Thus from her realm convey'd the beauteous prize,  
 And \*both her warlike lords outshined in Helen's eyes?  
 This deed, thy foes' delight, thy own disgrace,  
 Thy father's grief, and ruin of thy race :  
 This deed recalls thee to the proffer'd fight ; 75  
 Or hast thou injured whom thou darest not right ?  
 Soon to thy cost the field would make thee know  
 Thou keep'st the consort of a braver foe.  
 Thy graceful form instilling soft desire,  
 Thy curling tresses, and thy silver lyre, 80  
 Beauty and youth ; in vain to these you trust,  
 When youth and beauty shall be laid in dust :

When thou and thy allies with impious pride  
 Of two brave heroes stole the beauteous bride ? W.

Ver. 75.] He shows his author in disguise, who may be better  
 seen in Travers :

Yet now thou darest not bid thy warlike sword  
 Meet the just anger of her injured lord. W.

Ver. 80. *Thy curling tresses, and thy silver lyre.*] It is ingeniously remarked by Dacier, that Homer, who celebrates the Greeks for their long hair and Achilles for his skill on the harp, makes Hector in this place object them both to Paris. The Greeks nourished their hair to appear more dreadful to the enemy, and Paris to please the eyes of women. Achilles sung to his harp the acts of heroes, and Paris the amours of lovers. The same reason which makes Hector here displeased at them, made Alexander afterwards refuse to see this lyre of Paris, when offered to be shown to him, as Plutarch relates the story in his oration of the fortune of Alexander. P.

\* Theseus and Menelaus.



Troy yet may wake, and one avenging blow  
Crush the dire author of his country's woe.

His silence here, with blushes, Paris breaks; 85  
'Tis just, my brother, what your anger speaks :  
But who like thee can boast a soul sedate,  
So firmly proof to all the shocks of fate ?  
Thy force, like steel, a temper'd hardness shows,  
Still edged to wound, and still untired with blows ;  
Like steel uplifted by some strenuous swain, 91  
With falling woods to strew the wasted plain.  
Thy gifts I praise ; nor thou despise the charms  
With which a lover golden Venus arms ;  
Soft moving speech, and pleasing outward show, 95  
No wish can gain 'em, but the Gods bestow.  
Yet, would'st thou have the proffer'd combat stand,  
The Greeks and Trojans seat on either hand ;  
Then let a mid-way space our hosts divide,  
And on that stage of war the cause be tried : 100

Ver. 83. *One avenging blow.*] It is in the Greek, *You had been clad in a coat of stone.* Giphanius would have it to mean stoned to death on the account of his adultery : but this does not appear to have been the punishment of that crime among the Phrygians. It seems rather to signify, destroyed by the fury of the people, for the war he had brought upon them ; or perhaps may imply no more than being laid in his grave under a monument of stones ; but the former being the stronger sense, is here followed. P.

To understand this expression of sepulture under a *monument* of *stone* seems more obvious and natural, and much preferable indeed to the quaintness and affectation of the more common interpretation : which Lycophron, however, vindicates, who imitates this passage in ver. 333 of his *Cassandra*.

A vest of showering stones will thee enclose. W.

Ver. 93.] He drops an idea of his author. Ogilby is good :

Whose edge rebates not with the ponderous strokes

Of the strong ship-wright cleaving knotty oaks. W.

By Paris there the Spartan King be fought,  
For beauteous Helen and the wealth she brought;  
And who his rival can in arms subdue,  
His be the fair, and his the treasure too.  
Thus with a lasting league your toils may cease, 105  
And Troy possess her fertile fields in peace;  
Thus may the Greeks review their native shore,  
Much fam'd for generous steeds, for beauty more.

He said. The challenge Hector heard with  
joy,

Then with his spear restrain'd the youth of Troy,  
Held by the midst, athwart; and near the foe 111  
Advanced with steps majestically slow:  
While round his dauntless head the Grecians pour  
Their stones and arrows in a mingled shower.

Then thus the monarch great Atrides cried; 115  
Forbear ye warriors! lay the darts aside:  
A parley Hector asks, a message bears;  
We know him by the various plume he wears.  
Awed by his high command the Greeks attend,  
The tumult silence, and the fight suspend. 120

While from the centre Hector rolls his eyes  
On either host, and thus to both applies.

Ver. 109. *The challenge Hector heard with joy.*] Hector stays not to reply to his brother, but runs away with the challenge immediately. He looks upon all the Trojans as disgraced by the late flight of Paris, and thinks not a moment is to be lost to regain the honour of his country. The activity he shows in all this affair wonderfully agrees with the spirit of a soldier. P.

Ver. 113.] Homer says literally:

Their bows at him the long-hair'd Greeks direct,  
Their arrows aiming; and assail with stones. W.

Ver. 121.] This pompous couplet is amplified, very unseason-



Hear, all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands !  
 What Paris, author of the war, demands.  
 Your shining swords within the sheath restrain, 125  
 And pitch your lances in the yielding plain.  
 Here in the midst, in either army's sight,  
 He dares the Spartan King to single fight ;  
 And wills, that Helen and the ravish'd spoil  
 That caused the contest, shall reward the toil. 130  
 Let these the brave triumphant victor grace,  
 And differing nations part in leagues of peace.  
 He spoke : in still suspense on either side  
 Each army stood : the Spartan chief replied.  
 Me too, ye warriors, hear, whose fatal right 135  
 A world engages in the toils of fight.

ably, from two or three plain words of the original ; thus fully represented by Chapman :

And Hector spake to both the hosts.

W.

Ver. 123. *Hear all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands.*] It has been asked how the different nations could understand one another in these conferences, since we have no mention in Homer of any interpreter between them ? He who was so very particular in the most minute points, can hardly be thought to have been negligent in this. Some reasons may be offered that they both spoke the same language ; for the Trojans (as may be seen in Dion. Halic. lib. i.) were of Grecian extraction originally. Dardanus the first of their kings was born in Arcadia ; and even their names were originally Greek, as Hector, Anchises, Andromache, Astyanax &c. Of the last of these in particular, Homer gives us a derivation which is purely Greek, in Il. vi. ver. 403. But however it be, this is no more (as Dacier somewhere observes) than the just privilege of Poetry. Æneas and Turnus understand each other in Virgil, and the language of the poet is supposed to be universally intelligible, not only between different countries, but between earth and heaven itself.

P.

Ver. 125.] For this couplet his author has one line only :

Lay down your armour on the' all-nurturing earth. W.

To me the labour of the field resign ;  
 Me Paris injured ; all the war be mine.  
 Fall he that must beneath his rival's arms ;  
 And live the rest, secure of future harms. 140  
 Two lambs, devoted by your country's rite,  
 To Earth a sable, to the Sun a white,  
 Prepare ye Trojans ! while a third we bring  
 Select to Jove, the' inviolable King.  
 Let reverend Priam in the truce engage, 145  
 And add the sanction of considerate age.  
 His sons are faithless, headlong in debate,  
 And youth itself an empty wavering state :

Ver. 135.] These four verses bear no sort of resemblance to the original ; and for this deviation I can frame no good apology in behalf of our poet, because the sense is not ill represented either by Chapman or Ogilby. The reader will be glad to see a clear and neat exhibition of Homer's sense by Mr. Cowper :

Hear now me also, on whose aching heart  
 These woes have heaviest fallen. At last I hope  
 Decision near, Trojans and Greeks between ;  
 For ye have suffer'd in my quarrel much,  
 And much by Paris, author of the war. W.

Ver. 141. *Two lambs devoted.*] The Trojans (says the old scholiast) were required to sacrifice two lambs ; one male of a white colour, to the sun, and one female, and black, to the earth ; as the sun is father of light, and the earth the mother and nurse of men. The Greeks were to offer a third to Jupiter, perhaps to Jupiter Xenius, because the Trojans had broke the laws of hospitality : on which account we find Menelaüs afterwards invoking him in the combat with Paris. That these were the powers to which they sacrificed, appears by their being attested by name in the oath, ver. 346, &c. P.

Ver. 147 ] The phrase " headlong in *debate*," is a most frivolous and impertinent accommodation to the rhyme. He might have written :

His sons are faithless, headlong, *unsedate*. W.



Cool age advances venerably wise,  
Turns on all hands its deep-discerning eyes ;      150  
Sees what befel, and what may yet befall,  
Concludes from both, and best provides for all.

The nations hear, with rising hopes possest,  
And peaceful prospects dawn in every breast.  
Within the lines they drew their steeds around,      155  
And from their chariots issued on the ground :  
Next all unbuckling the rich mail they wore,  
Laid their bright arms along the sable shore.  
On either side the meeting hosts are seen  
With lances fix'd, and close the space between.      160  
Two heralds now, dispatch'd to Troy, invite  
The Phrygian monarch to the peaceful rite ;  
Talthybius hastens to the fleet, to bring  
The lamb for Jove, the' inviolable King.

Mean time, to beauteous Helen, from the skies      165  
The various goddess of the rainbow flies :

Ver. 165. *Mean time to beauteous Helen, &c.*] The following part, where we have the first sight of Helena, is what I cannot think inferior to any in the poem. The reader has naturally an aversion to this pernicious beauty, and is apt enough to wonder at the Greeks for endeavouring to recover her at such an expence. But her amiable behaviour here, the secret wishes that rise in favour of her rightful Lord, her tenderness for her parents and relations, the relentings of her soul for the mischief's her beauty had been the cause of, the confusion she appears in, the veiling her face, and dropping a tear ; are particulars so beautifully natural, as to make every reader, no less than Menelaüs himself, inclined to forgive her at least if not to love her. We are afterwards confirmed in this partiality by the sentiment of the old counsellors upon the sight of her, which one would think Homer put into their mouths with that very view : we excuse her no more than Priam does himself, and all those do who felt the calamities she occasioned : and this regard for her is heightened by all she says herself ; in which

(Like fair Laodicè in form and face,  
 The loveliest nymph of Priam's royal race)  
 Her in the palace, at her loom she found ;  
 The golden web her own sad story crown'd. 170  
 The Trojan wars she weaved (herself the prize)  
 And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.  
 To whom the goddess of the painted bow ;  
 Approach, and view the wonderous scene below !  
 Each hardy Greek, and valiant Trojan knight, 175  
 So dreadful late, and furious for the fight,  
 Now rest their spears, or lean upon their shields ;  
 Ceased is the war, and silent all the fields.  
 Paris alone and Sparta's king advance,  
 In single fight to toss the beamy lance ; 180  
 Each, met in arms, the fate of combat tries,  
 Thy love the motive, and thy charms the prize.  
 This said, the many-colour'd maid inspires  
 Her husband's love, and wakes her former fires ;  
 Her country, parents, all that once were dear, 185  
 Rush to her thought, and force a tender tear.  
 O'er her fair face a snowy veil she threw,  
 And, softly sighing, from the loom withdrew.  
 Her handmaids Clymenè and Æthra wait  
 Her silent footsteps to the Scæan gate. 190

there is scarce a word, that is not big with repentance and good-nature. P.

Ver. 170. *The golden web her own sad story crown'd.*] This is a very agreeable fiction, to represent Helena weaving in a large veil, or piece of tapestry, the story of the Trojan war. One would think that Homer inherited this veil, and that his Iliad is only an explication of that admirable piece of art. Dacier. P.

Thus his original, literally :

She a large web was weaving double bright.

W.



There sat the seniors of the Trojan race,  
(Old Priam's chiefs, and most in Priam's grace)  
The King the first; Thyœtes at his side;  
Lampus and Clytius, long in council tried;  
Panthus, and Hicetæon, once the strong; 195  
And next, the wisest of the reverend throng,  
Antenor grave, and sage Ucalegon,  
Lean'd on the walls, and bask'd before the sun.  
Chiefs, who no more in bloody fights engage,  
But wise through time, and narrative with age, 200  
In summer days, like grasshoppers rejoice,  
A bloodless race, that send a feeble voice.  
These, when the Spartan queen approach'd the tower,  
In secret own'd resistless beauty's power:  
They cried, No wonder, such celestial charms 205  
For nine long years have set the world in arms!  
What winning graces! what majestic mien!  
She moves a Goddess, and she looks a Queen!  
Yet hence, oh heaven! convey that fatal face,  
And from destruction save the Trojan race. 210  
The good old Priam welcomed her, and cried,  
Approach, my child, and grace thy father's side.  
See on the plain thy Grecian spouse appears,  
The friends and kindred of thy former years.  
No crime of thine our present sufferings draws, 215  
Not thou, but Heaven's disposing will the cause;

Ver. 201.] Homer himself has annexed to these *grasshoppers* no epithet, but Dacier calls them “*foibles, et presque dénuées de sang* ;” mindful, I presume, of that most elegant *ode* to the *grasshopper* in Anacreon. And our translator's model adds *sitting on a tree* : and it is well known that the *cicada* is a larger insect than our grasshopper, and of different modes of living. W.

The Gods these armies and this force employ,  
 The hostile Gods conspire the fate of Troy.  
 But lift thy eyes, and say, What Greek is he  
 (Far as from hence these aged orbs can see) 220  
 Around whose brow such martial graces shine,  
 So tall, so awful, and almost divine?  
 Though some of larger stature tread the green,  
 None match his grandeur and exalted mien :  
 He seems a monarch and his country's pride. 225  
 Thus ceased the King, and thus the fair replied.

Before thy presence, Father, I appear  
 With conscious shame and reverential fear.  
 Ah ! had I died, ere to these walls I fled,  
 False to my country, and my nuptial bed; 230

Ver. 219. *And say, What chief is he?*] This view of the Grecian leaders from the walls of Troy, is justly looked upon as an episode of great beauty, as well as a master-piece of conduct in Homer ; who by this means acquaints the readers with the figure and qualifications of each hero in a more lively and agreeable manner. Several great poets have been engaged by the beauty of this passage to an imitation of it. In the seventh book of Statius, Phorbias standing with Antigone on the tower of Thebes, shews her the forces as they were drawn up, and describes their commanders, who were neighbouring princes of Bœotia. It is also imitated by Tasso in his third book, where Erminia from the walls of Jerusalem points out the chief warriors to the king ; though the latter part is perhaps copied too closely and minutely ; for he describes Godfrey to be of a port that bespeaks him a prince, the next of somewhat a lower stature, a third renowned for his wisdom, and then another is distinguished by the largeness of his chest and breadth of his shoulders : which are not only the very particulars, but in the very order of Homer's. P.

The original runs literally thus :

Tell me by name that man of ample bulk ;  
 Which of the Greeks he is, so broad and tall :  
 out of which our poet has wrought these *four* verses, with some assistance from Dacier. W.



My brothers, friends, and daughter left behind,  
 False to them all, to Paris only kind !  
 For this I mourn, till grief or dire disease  
 Shall waste the form whose crime it was to please !  
 The King of Kings, Atrides, you survey,                   235  
 Great in the war, and great in arts of sway:  
 My brother once, before my days of shame ;  
 And oh ! that still he bore a brother's name !

With wonder Priam view'd the god-like man,  
 Extoll'd the happy Prince, and thus began.                   240  
 O blest Atrides ! born to prosperous fate,  
 Successful monarch of a mighty state !  
 How vast thy empire ! Of yon' matchless train  
 What numbers lost, what numbers yet remain !  
 In Phrygia once were gallant armies known,                   245  
 In ancient time, when Otreus fill'd the throne,  
 When god-like Mygdon led their troops of horse,  
 And I, to join them, raised the Trojan force :  
 Against the manlike Amazons we stood,  
 And Sangar's stream ran purple with their blood. 250

Ver. 233.] The precise sense of his author he might easily have transferred thus:

——Yet I alas !

Died not, and therefore *waste myself in tears.* . . . . W.

Ver. 236. *Great in the war, and great in arts of sway.*] This was the verse which Alexander the Great preferred to all others in Homer, and which he proposed as the pattern of his own actions, as including whatever can be desired in a prince. Plut. Orat. de fort. Alex. 1. P.

Ver. 238.] The sense of the original, if I rightly conceive it, may be properly represented thus :

My brother once, if I may use that name ! . . . . W.

But far inferior those in martial grace  
And strength of numbers to this Grecian race.

This said, once more he view'd the warrior- train :  
What's he, whose arms lie scatter'd on the plain ?  
Broad is his breast, his shoulders larger spread, 255  
Though great Atrides overtops his head.

Nor yet appear his care and conduct small ;  
From rank to rank he moves, and orders all.  
The stately ram thus measures o'er the ground,  
And, master of the flock surveys them round. 260

Then Helen thus. Whom your discerning eyes  
Have singled out, is Ithacus the wise :  
A barren island boasts his glorious birth ;  
His fame for wisdom fills the spacious earth.

Antenor took the word, and thus began : 265  
Myself, O king ! have seen that wonderous man ;  
When trusting Jove and hospitable laws,  
To Troy he came to plead the Grecian cause ;  
(Great Menelaüs urged the same request)  
My house was honour'd with each royal guest : 270

Ver. 251.] The first edition has, in *manly* grace. And Homer says only :

Nor these so numerous, as the quick-eyed Greeks. W.

Ver. 259.] Travers has done this couplet much better :

He, like the ram amidst his fleecy train,

Runs through the ranks, and orders all the plain :  
though he should have written: *Stalks* through the ranks. W.

Ver. 265.] He omits a line of his original, and is exceedingly unfaithful. Thus Travers :

His silence here the grave Antenor broke :

'Tis true, O ! Helen, what your praises spoke.

Greece did Ulysses and thy prince employ,

Sent in thy cause her delegates to Troy. W.



I knew their persons and admired their parts,  
 Both brave in arms, and both approved in arts.  
 Erect, the Spartan most engaged our view ;  
 Ulysses, seated, greater reverence drew.  
 When Atreus' son harangued the listening train, 275  
 Just was his sense, and his expression plain,  
 His words succinct, yet full, without a fault;  
 He spoke no more than just the thing he ought.

Ver. 271. *I knew their persons, &c.*] In this view of the leaders of the army, it had been an oversight in Homer to have taken no notice of Menelaüs, who was not only one of the principal of them, but was immediately to engage the observation of the reader in the single combat. On the other hand, it had been a high indecorum to have made Helena speak of him. He has therefore put his praises into the mouth of Antenor: which was also a more artful way than to have presented him to the eye of Priam in the same manner with the rest: it appears from hence, what a regard he has had both to decency and variety in the conduct of his poem.

This passage concerning the different eloquence of Menelaüs and Ulysses is inexpressibly just and beautiful. The close laconick conciseness of the one, is finely opposed to the copious, vehement, and penetrating oratory of the other; which is so exquisitely described in the simile of the snow falling *fast*, and sinking *deep*. For it is in this the beauty of the comparison consists, according to Quintilian, l. xii. c. 10. *In Ulysse facundiam & magnitudinem junxit, qui orationem nivibus hybernis copiâ verborum atque impetu parem tribuit.* We may set in the same light with these the character of Nestor's eloquence, which consisted in softness and persuasiveness, and is therefore (in contradistinction to this of Ulysses) compared to honey which drops gently and slowly; a manner of speech extremely natural to a benevolent old man, such as Nestor is represented. Ausonius has elegantly distinguished these three kinds of oratory in the following verses:

“ *Dulcem in paucis ut Plisthenidem*

“ *Et torrentem cœli Dulichii*

“ *Ningida dicta:*

“ *Et mellitæ nectare vocis*

“ *Dulciâ fatu verba canentem*

“ *Nestora regem.*”

But when Ulysses rose, in thought profound,  
 His modest eyes he fix'd upon the ground ; 280  
 As one unskill'd or dumb, he seem'd to stand,  
 Nor raised his head, nor stretch'd his sceptred  
 hand.

But, when he speaks, what elocution flows !  
 Soft as the fleeces of descending snows  
 The copious accents fall, with easy art ; 285  
 Melting they fall, and sink into the heart !  
 Wondering we hear, and, fix'd in deep surprise,  
 Our ears refute the censure of our eyes.

Ver. 282.] Mr. Cowper has dexterously exhibited this difficult passage of his original, which our poet would not attempt :

That, hadst thou seen him, thou hadst thought him, sure,  
 Some chafed and angry idiot, passion-fixt. W.

Ver. 284.] It is plain from the *stupid silence* just described, that a contrast was intended ; and that our poet and the other translators, who turn the comparison to a melting softness, have misapprehended its force and beauty. Travers' translation, with a little correction as follows, is, in my opinion, excellent :

But, when his artful prudence to disclose,  
 Up from his seat the sage Ulysses rose,  
 His stedfast eyes he fixt upon the ground,  
 Nor rear'd his hand, nor waved his sceptre round :  
 But like the form of stupid dulness stood,  
 Or madness thoughtful in his sullen mood :  
 Yet from his breast his powerful accents flow  
 Thick and impetuous, as the wintry snow.

So Quintilian, quoted by Clarke, conceived the passage, xi. 3.  
 " Mire auditurum dicturi cura delectat.—Hoc præcipit Homerus,  
 " Ulyssis exemplo, quem stetisse oculis in terram defixis, immoto-  
 " que sceptro, priusquam illam eloquentiæ *procellam* effunderet,  
 " dicit : " before he *poured out* that *storm* of eloquence. W.

Ver. 288.] This is one of those noble additions, in the ardour of enthusiasm, which exalts the translator to the rank of his original, and compensates a thousand imperfections. Compare Od. iii. 153. W.



The king then ask'd (as yet the camp he view'd)  
 What chief is that, with giant strength endued, 290  
 Whose brawny shoulders, and whose swelling  
     chest,  
 And lofty stature, far exceed the rest ?  
 Ajax the great (the beauteous queen replied)  
 Himself a host : the Grecian strength and pride.  
 See ! bold Idomeneus superior towers 295  
 Amidst yon circle of his Cretan powers,  
 Great as a God ! I saw him once before,  
 With Menelaüs, on the Spartan shore.  
 The rest I know, and could in order name ;  
 All valiant chiefs, and men of mighty fame. 300  
 Yet two are wanting of the numerous train,  
 Whom long my eyes have sought, but sought in vain ;  
 Castor and Pollux, first in martial force,  
 One bold on foot, and one renown'd for horse.  
 My brothers these ; the same our native shore, 305  
 One house contain'd us, as one mother bore.  
 Perhaps the chiefs, from warlike toils at ease,  
 For distant Troy refused to sail the seas :

Ver. 289.] It were easy to have expressed his original thus :

The king then ask'd, *great Ajax* as he viewed—. W.

Ver. 297.] He adheres very little to his author, when there does not appear the least inducement to deviation. Thus Travers :

Our seat would oft that royal guest detain,

When he from Crete to Sparta crost the main. W.

Ver. 304.] Mr. Cowper renders faithfully :

— for equestrian skill

One famed, and one *a boxer* never foil'd. W.

Ver. 307.] We see but little of Homer here, which is the more to be wondered at, when Hobbes and Chapman have very clearly exhibited the sense of their author. Thus Travers :

Perhaps their swords some nobler quarrel draws,  
Ashamed to combat in their sister's cause. 310

So spoke the fair, nor knew her brothers' doom,  
Wrapt in the cold embraces of the tomb;  
Adorn'd with honours in their native shore,  
Silent they slept, and heard of wars no more. 314

Meantime the heralds, through the crowded town,  
Bring the rich wine and destined victims down.

Idæus' arms the golden goblets prest,  
Who thus the venerable king address.

Arise, O father of the Trojan state!  
The nations call, thy joyful people wait 320  
To seal the truce, and end the dire debate.

Paris thy son, and Sparta's king advance,  
In measured lists to toss the weighty lance;  
And who his rival shall in arms subdue,  
His be the dame, and his the treasure too. 325

Thus with a lasting league our toils may cease,  
And Troy possess her fertile fields in peace;  
So shall the Greeks review their native shore,  
Much famed for generous steeds, for beauty more.

Perhaps, the chiefs from Sparta's lovely plain  
Spread not their sails along the stormy main;  
Or now refuse disgraceful arms to wield,  
Forced by my shame to fly the' inglorious field. W.

Ver. 311.] These *four* verses are imagined from *two* of his  
author, thus, word for word:

She said; but earth, life-giving, held them now  
In Lacedæmon, their dear native land.

Ver. 316.] Travers keeps close to his author:

Two votive lambs, a goat's distended skin,  
Whose bulk inclosed the sacred wine within. W.

Ver. 320.] How easily he might have been faithful here!

The *Grecians* call, thy *Trojan subjects* wait. W.



With grief he heard, and bade the chiefs prepare  
To join the milk-white coursers to the car : 329  
He mounts the seat, Antenor at his side ;  
The gentle steeds through Scæa's gates they guide :  
Next from the car descending on the plain,  
Amid the Grecian host and Trojan train 335  
Slow they proceed ; the sage Ulysses then  
Arose, and with him rose the King of men.  
On either side a sacred herald stands,  
The wine they mix, and on each monarch's hands  
Pour the full urn ; then draws the Grecian lord 340  
His cutlace sheath'd beside his ponderous sword ;  
From the sign'd victims crops the curling hair,  
The heralds part it, and the princes share ;  
Then loudly thus before the' attentive bands  
He calls the Gods, and spreads his lifted hands. 345  
O first and greatest power ! whom all obey,  
Who high on Ida's holy mountain sway,  
Eternal Jove ! and you bright orb that roll  
From east to west, and view from pole to pole !  
Thou mother Earth ! and all ye living floods ! 350  
Infernal Furies, and Tartarean gods,

Ver. 340.] This is a strange blunder, or at least an inexcusable ambiguity, into which Ogilby may have led him :

— and wine commix'd with wine

Pour on the princes' hands.

Thus Travers very properly :

With that the warriors of Laërtes' line

Rose with the king, the heralds mix'd the wine :

Near to the kings the sacred heralds drew,

And o'er their hands the ritual *water* threw.

W.

Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare  
 For perjured kings, and all who falsely swear !  
 Hear, and be witness. If, by Paris slain,  
 Great Menelaüs press the fatal plain, 355  
 The dame and treasures let the Trojan keep ;  
 And Greece returning plow the watery deep.  
 If by my brother's lance the Trojan bleed ;  
 Be his the wealth and beauteous dame decreed :  
 The' appointed fine let Ilion justly pay, 360  
 And every age record the signal day.  
 This if the Phrygians shall refuse to yield,  
 Arms must revenge, and Mars decide the field.

With that the chief the tender victims slew ;  
 And in the dust their bleeding bodies threw : 365  
 The vital spirit issued at the wound,  
 And left the members quivering on the ground.  
 From the same urn they drink the mingled wine,  
 And add libations to the powers divine.  
 While thus their prayers united mount the sky : 370  
 Hear, mighty Jove ! and hear ye gods on high !  
 And may their blood, who first the league confound,  
 Shed like this wine, distain the thirsty ground ;

Ver. 364. *The chief the tender victims slew.*] One of the grand objections which the ignorance of some moderns has raised against Homer, is what they call a defect in the manners of his heroes. They are shocked to find his kings employed in such offices as slaughtering of beasts, &c. But they forget that sacrificing was the most solemn act of religion, and that kings of old in most nations were also chief-priests. This, among other objections of the same kind, the reader may see answered in the preface. P.

Ver. 372.] Homer says only :

May, like this wine, their brains bedew the ground. W.



May all their consorts serve promiscuous lust,  
And all their race be scatter'd as the dust ! 375

Thus either host their imprecations join'd,  
Which Jove refused, and mingled with the wind.

The rites now finish'd, reverend Priam rose,  
And thus express'd a heart o'ercharged with woes.  
Ye Greeks and Trojans, let the chiefs engage, 380  
But spare the weakness of my feeble age :

In yonder walls that object let me shun,  
Nor view the danger of so dear a son.  
Whose arms shall conquer, and what prince shall fall,  
Heaven only knows, for Heaven disposes all. 385

This said, the hoary king no longer staid,  
But on his car the slaughter'd victims laid ;  
Then seized the reins his gentle steeds to guide,  
And drove to Troy, Antenor at his side.

Bold Hector and Ulysses now dispose 390  
The lists of combat, and the ground inclose ;  
Next to decide by sacred lots prepare,  
Who first shall launch his pointed spear in air.

The people pray with elevated hands, 394  
And words like these are heard through all the bands.

Immortal Jove, high heaven's superior lord,  
On lofty Ida's holy mount ador'd !  
Whoe'er involved us in this dire debate,  
Oh give that author of the war to fate  
And shades eternal ! let division cease, 400  
And joyful nations join in leagues of peace.

Ver. 378, 9.] The original is simply,  
'Midst them spake Priam, son of Dardanus.

With eyes averted Hector hastes to turn  
 The lots of fight, and shakes the brazen urn.  
 Then, Paris, thine leap'd forth ; by fatal chance  
 Ordain'd the first to whirl the weighty lance. 405  
 Both armies sat the combat to survey,  
 Beside each chief his azure armour lay,  
 And round the lists the generous coursers neigh. }  
 The beauteou warrior now arrays for fight,  
 In gilded arms magnificently bright : 410  
 The purple cuishes clasp his thighs around,  
 With flowers adorn'd, with silver buckles bound :  
 Lycaon's corslet his fair body drest,  
 Braced in, and fitted to his softer breast ;  
 A radiant baldric, o'er his shoulder tied, 415  
 Sustain'd his sword that glitter'd at his side :  
 His youthful face a polish'd helm o'erspread ;  
 The waving horse-hair nodded on his head ;  
 His figured shield, a shining orb, he takes,  
 And in his hand a pointed javelin shakes. 420  
 With equal speed, and fired by equal charms,  
 The Spartan hero sheaths his limbs in arms.

Now round the lists the' admiring armies stand,  
 With javelins fix'd, the Greek and Trojan band.

Ver. 409.] The following version of the *first two* lines of this passage is literal :

Illustrious Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's spouse,  
 Straight round his shoulders threw his beauteous arms. W.

Ver. 423.] Our poet pays but little attention to his author, who may be seen more clearly in Travers' translation :

Thus arm'd and frowning with a fierce disdain,  
 March'd the two chiefs amidst the fatal plain :  
 A deep suspense, as each advanced along,  
 Sate in the eyes of all the gazing throng.



Amidst the dreadful vale the chiefs advance, 425  
 All pale with rage, and shake the threatening lance.  
 The Trojan first his shining javelin threw ;  
 Full on Atrides' ringing shield it flew,  
 Nor pierced the brazen orb, but with a bound  
 Leap'd from the buckler, blunted on the ground. 430  
 Atrides then his massy lance prepares,  
 In act to throw, but first prefers his prayers.  
 Give me, great Jove ! to punish lawless lust,  
 And lay the Trojan gasping in the dust :  
 Destroy the' aggressor, aid my righteous cause, 435  
 Avenge the breach of hospitable laws !  
 Let this example future times reclaim,  
 And guard from wrong fair friendship's holy name.  
 He said, and poised in air the javelin sent,  
 Through Paris' shield the forceful weapon went, 440  
 His corslet pierces, and his garment rends,  
 And glancing downward, near his flank descends.  
 The wary Trojan, bending from the blow,  
 Eludes the death, and disappoints his foe :  
 But fierce Atrides waved his sword, and strook 445  
 Full on his casque ; the crested helmet shook ;

Now foe to foe their brazen javelins shook ;

Loured with revenge, and glared an angry look.

W.

Ver. 427.] He should have written :

Atrides first his *quivering* javelin threw :

for this epithet would have conveyed an idea of *length* agreeably to his author ; and in other respects been preferable to the present word.

W.

Ver. 433. *Give me, great Jove.*] Homer puts a prayer in the mouth of Menelaüs, but none in Paris's : Menelaüs is the person injured and innocent, and may therefore apply to God for justice ; but Paris, who is the criminal, remains silent. *Spondanus.* P.

The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand,  
 Broke short : the fragments glitter'd on the sand.  
 The raging warrior to the spacious skies  
 Raised his upbraiding voice, and angry eyes : 450  
 Then is it vain in Jove himself to trust ?  
 And is it thus the Gods assist the just ?  
 When crimes provoke us, Heaven success denies :  
 The dart falls harmless, and the faulchion flies.  
 Furious he said, and toward the Grecian crew 455  
 (Seized by the crest) the' unhappy warrior drew ;  
 Struggling he follow'd, while the' embroider'd thong,  
 That tied his helmet, dragg'd the chief along.  
 Then had his ruin crown'd Atrides' joy,  
 But Venus trembled for the prince of Troy : 460  
 Unseen she came, and burst the golden band ;  
 And left an empty helmet in his hand.  
 The casque, enraged, amidst the Greeks he threw ;  
 The Greeks with smiles the polish'd trophy view.  
 Then, as once more he lifts the deadly dart, 465  
 In thirst of vengeance, at his rival's heart,  
 The queen of Love her favour'd champion shrouds  
 (For Gods can all things) in a veil of clouds.  
 Raised from the field the panting youth she led,  
 And gently laid him on the bridal bed, 470

Ver. 453.] Homer is better represented through this address by Travers, than by our author.

O ! envious Jove, from thee descends my woe ;  
 Thou shield'st from vengeance this injurious foe.  
 See the sword shivers, and the fatal dart  
 Errs from my arm, nor wounds the traitor's heart.

The *second* line should have been :

*I hoped revenge on this injurious foe.*

W.



With pleasing sweets his fainting sense renews,  
And all the dome perfumes with heavenly dews.

Meantime the brightest of the female kind,  
The matchless Helen, o'er the walls reclin'd :  
To her, beset with Trojan beauties, came 475  
In borrow'd form the \*laughter-loving dame.  
(She seem'd an ancient maid, well-skill'd to cull  
The snowy fleece, and wind the twisted wool.)

Ver. 470.] Homer says only,

Laid in a chamber fragrant with perfumes.

W.

Ver. 475. This passage in the *first* edition stood thus :

To her, beset with Trojan beauties, came

In Græa's form, the laughter-loving dame.

(Græa, her favourite maid, well-skill'd to cull

The snowy fleece, and wind the twisted wool.)

Our poet (as Mr. STEEVENS observed to me, and to whom the reader is wholly indebted for the curious information contained in this note) was misled by Chapman in supposing, from an ignorance of the language, that the *Greek substantive* for an *old woman* was a *proper name*. This is Chapman's version :

To give her errand good successe, she took on her the shape  
Of beldame Græa.

And Chapman was misled by Arthur Hall, who printed at London in 1581, *ten* books of Homer's Iliades, translated out of French. This is Hall's version :

Venus, not willing to be knowne, in humaine shape ap-  
peares,

In Græa's forme, the good handmaid, nowe wel ystept in  
yeares.

The French translator, rendered by Hall, was " Hugues Salel, de la Chambre du Roy, and Abbé de Saint Cheron: 1555." Of this book Arthur Hall's own copy is now in the *British Museum*. Salel's version of the passage before us, runs thus :

Venus avoit, pour estre descogneau,

Prins ung habit humain à sa venue,

C'est de Grea, la bonne chambriere,

Bien vielle d'ans.

W,

\* Venus.

The Goddess softly shook her silken vest, 479  
That shed perfumes, and whispering thus addrest.

Haste, happy nymph ! for thee thy Paris calls,  
Safe from the fight, in yonder lofty walls,  
Fair as a God ! with odours round him spread  
He lies, and waits thee on the well-known bed :  
Not like a warrior parted from the foe, 485  
But some gay dancer in the publick show.

She spoke, and Helen's secret soul was mov'd ;  
She scorn'd the champion, but the man she lov'd.  
Fair Venus' neck, her eyes that sparkled fire,  
And breast, reveal'd the queen of soft desire. 490  
Struck with her presence, straight the lively red  
Forsook her cheek ; and, trembling, thus she said.  
Then is it still thy pleasure to deceive ?  
And woman's frailty always to believe ?  
Say, to new nations must I cross the main, 495  
Or carry wars to some soft Asian plain ?  
For whom must Helen break her second vow ?  
What other Paris is thy darling now ?  
Left to Atrides (victor in the strife)  
An odious conquest and a captive wife, 500  
Hence let me sail : and if thy Paris bear  
My absence ill, let Venus ease his care.  
A hand-maid goddess at his side to wait,  
Renounce the glories of thy heavenly state,

Ver. 501.] There is nothing like this in Homer, whom Travers  
has more happily exhibited :

Since now thy Paris on the fatal strand  
Falls by the valour of Atrides' hand,  
Since I must hence an odious bride depart,  
Comest thou insidious to seduce my heart ?

W.



Be fix'd for ever to the Trojan shore, 505  
His spouse, or slave; and mount the skies no  
more.

For me, to lawless love no longer led,  
I scorn the coward, and detest his bed;  
Else should I merit everlasting shame,  
And keen reproach, from every Phrygian dame:  
Ill suits it now the joys of love to know, 511  
Too deep my anguish, and too wild my woe.

Then thus, incensed, the Paphian queen replies:  
Obey the power from whom thy glories rise:  
Should Venus leave thee, every charm must fly, 515  
Fade from thy cheek, and languish in thy eye.  
Cease to provoke me, lest I make thee more  
The world's aversion, than their love before;  
Now the bright prize for which mankind engage,  
Then, the sad victim of the publick rage. 520

Ver. 511.] This couplet represents *four* words only of his author: "I have innumerable sorrows in my mind." W.

Ver. 513.] Our poet throughout this speech is uncommonly inattentive to his author. Thus Travers:

To whom the goddess with an angry voice:  
Urge not my wrath, lest I renounce my choice.  
Should I incensed my guardian power remove,  
Should once my hate glow furious as my love;  
Soon will revenge, inspired by my commands,  
Rage in the breasts of all the hostile bands:  
Now to their wrath shall yield thy odious breath,  
And all thy beauties shall be lost in death. W.

Ver. 521.] This couplet misrepresents his author, who may be seen to advantage in Mr. Cowper; with the alteration of one word only:

The Goddess ceased: Jove's daughter, Helen, fear'd:  
And, in her lucid *vest* close wrapt around,  
Silent retired, of all those Trojan dames  
Unseen; and Venus led, herself, the way. W.

At this, the fairest of her sex obey'd,  
 And veil'd her blushes in a silken shade ;  
 Unseen, and silent, from the train she moves,  
 Led by the Goddess of the Smiles and Loves.

Arrived, and enter'd at the palace-gate, 525  
 The maids officious round their mistress wait ;  
 Then all dispersing, various tasks attend ;  
 The queen and Goddess to the prince ascend.  
 Full in her Paris' sight, the queen of Love  
 Had placed the beauteous progeny of Jove ; 530  
 Where, as he view'd her charms, she turn'd away  
 Her glowing eyes, and thus began to say.

Is this the chief, who lost to sense of shame  
 Late fled the field, and yet survives his fame ?  
 Oh hadst thou died beneath the righteous sword 535  
 Of that brave man whom once I call'd my lord !  
 The boaster Paris oft desired the day  
 With Sparta's king to meet in single fray :  
 Go now, once more thy rival's rage excite,  
 Provoke Atrides, and renew the fight : 540  
 Yet Helen bids thee stay, lest thou unskill'd  
 Should'st fall an easy conquest on the field.

The prince replies ; Ah cease, divinely fair,  
 Nor add reproaches to the wounds I bear ;  
 This day the foe prevail'd by Pallas' power ; 545  
 We yet may vanquish in a happier hour :  
 There want not Gods to favour us above :  
 But let the business of our lives be love :

Ver. 537.] Ogilby is exact :

Thou before his thy prowess didst advance,  
 Thy skill, thy strength preferring, and thy launce. W.



These softer moments let delights employ,  
 And kind embraces snatch the hasty joy. 550  
 Not thus I loved thee, when from Sparta's shore  
 My forced, my willing heavenly prize I bore,

Ver. 551. *Not thus I loved thee.*] However Homer may be admired for his conduct in this passage, I find a general outcry against Paris on this occasion. Plutarch has led the way in his treatise of reading poets, by remarking it as a most heinous act of incontinence in him, to go to bed to his lady in the *day-time*. Among the commentators the most violent is the moral expositor Spondanus, who will not so much as allow him to say a civil thing to Helen. *Mollis, effceminatus, & spurcus ille adulter, nihil de libidine suâ imminutum dicit, sed nunc magis eâ corripî quàm unquam aliàs, ne quidem cùm primùm eam ipsi dedit (Latini ita rectè exprimunt τὸ μίσιςθαι in re venerêâ) in insula Cranaë. Cum alioqui homines primi concubitûs soleant esse ardentiores.* I could not deny the reader the diversion of this remark, nor Spondanus the glory of his zeal, who was but two-and-twenty when it was written. Madam Dacier is also very severe upon Paris, but for a reason more natural to a lady; she is of opinion that the passion of the lover would scarce have been so excessive as he here describes it, but for fear of losing his mistress immediately, as foreseeing the Greeks would demand her. One may answer to this lively remark, that Paris having nothing to say for himself, was obliged to testify an uncommon ardour for his lady, at a time when compliments were to pass instead of reasons. I hope to be excused, if (in revenge of her remark upon our sex) I observe upon the behaviour of Helen throughout this book, which gives a pretty natural picture of the manners of theirs. We see her first in tears, repentant, covered with confusion at the sight of Priam, and secretly inclined to return to her former spouse. The disgrace of Paris encreases her dislike of him; she rails, she reproaches, she wishes his death; and after all, is prevailed upon by one kind compliment, and yields to his embraces. Methinks when this lady's observation and mine are laid together, the best that can be made of them is to conclude, that since both the sexes have their frailties, it would be well for each to forgive the other.

It is worth looking backward, to observe the *allegory* here carried on with respect to Helen, who lives through this whole book in a whirl of passions, and is agitated by turns with sentiments of

When first entranced in Cranaë's isle I lay,  
 Mix'd with thy soul, and all dissolved away !  
 Thus having spoke, the' enamour'd Phrygian boy  
 Rush'd to the bed, impatient for the joy. 556  
 Him Helen follow'd slow with bashful charms,  
 And clasp'd the blooming hero in her arms.

While these to love's delicious rapture yield,  
 The stern Atrides rages round the field : 560

honour and love. The Goddesses made use of, to cast the appearance of fable over the story, are Iris and Venus. When Helen is called to the tower to behold her former friends, Iris the messenger of Juno (the Goddess of honour) is sent for her; and when invited to the bed-chamber of Paris, Venus is to beckon her out of the company. The forms they take to carry on these different affairs, are properly chosen: the one assuming the person of the daughter of Antenor, who pressed most for her being restored to Menelaüs; the other the shape of an old maid, who was privy to the intrigue with Paris from the beginning. And in the consequences, as the one inspires the love of her former empire, friends and country: so the other instils the dread of being cast off by all if she forsook her second choice, and causes the return of her tenderness to Paris. But if she has a struggle for honour, she is in a bondage to love; which gives the story its turn that way, and makes Venus oftener appear than Iris. There is in one place a lover to be protected, in another a love-quarrel to be made up, in both which the Goddess is kindly officious. She conveys Paris to Troy, when he had escaped the enemy; which may signify his love for his mistress, that hurried him away to justify himself before her. She softens and terrifies Helen, in order to make up the breach between them: and even when that affair is finished, we do not find the poet dismisses her from the chamber, whatever privacies the lovers had a mind to: in which circumstances he seems to draw aside the veil of his allegory, and to let the reader at last into the meaning of it, That the Goddess of love has been all the while nothing more than the passion of it. P.

Ver. 559.] Our translator expatiates too freely. Thus Travers, without omitting any thoughts of his original:

But fierce Atrides in the field below  
 Raged like a lion, for his absent foe.

W.



So some fell lion whom the woods obey  
Roars through the desert, and demands his prey.  
Paris he seeks, impatient to destroy,  
But seeks in vain along the troops of Troy ;  
Even those had yielded to a foe so brave 565  
The recreant warrior, hateful as the grave.  
Then speaking thus, the King of Kings arose ;  
Ye Trojans, Dardans, all our generous foes !  
Hear and attest! from heaven with conquest crown'd,  
Our brother's arms the just success have found : 570  
Be therefore now the Spartan wealth restor'd,  
Let Argive Helen own her lawful lord ;  
The' appointed fine let Ilion justly pay,  
And age to age record this signal day.  
He ceased ; his army's loud applauses rise, 575  
And the long shout runs echoing through the skies.

Ver. 575.] For this couplet his original only has,  
Atrides spake, and all the Greeks approved.

W.





THE  
FOURTH BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

NOTICE

OF THE



## THE ARGUMENT.

---

THE BREACH OF THE TRUCE, AND THE FIRST BATTLE.

*THE Gods deliberate in council concerning the Trojan war: they agree upon the continuation of it, and Jupiter sends down Minerva to break the truce. She persuades Pandarus to aim an arrow at Menelaüs, who is wounded, but cured by Machaon. In the mean time some of the Trojan Troops attack the Greeks. Agamemnon is distinguished in all the parts of a good General; he reviews the troops, and exhorts the leaders, some by praises and some by reproofs. Nestor is particularly celebrated for his military discipline. The battle joins, and great numbers are slain on both sides.*

*The same day continues through this, as through the last book (as it does also through the two following, and almost to the end of the seventh book). The scene is wholly in the field before Troy.*

P.

## NOTE PRELIMINARY.

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**I**T was from the beginning of this book that Virgil has taken that of his tenth *Æneid*, as the whole tenor of the story in this and the last book is followed in his twelfth. The truce and the solemn oath, the breach of it by a dart thrown by Tolumnius, Junturna's inciting the Latines to renew the war, the wound of *Æneas*, his speedy cure, and the battle ensuing, all these are manifestly copied from hence. The solemnity, surprise, and variety of these circumstances, seemed to him of importance enough, to build the whole catastrophe of his work upon them ; though in Homer they are but openings to the general action, and such as in their warmth are still exceeded by all that follow them. They are chosen, we grant, by Virgil with great judgment, and conclude his poem with a becoming majesty : yet the finishing his scheme with that which is but the coolest part of Homer's action, tends in some degree to shew the disparity of the poetical fire in these two authors.



THE  
FOURTH BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

---

AND now Olympus' shining gates unfold ;  
The Gods, with Jove, assume their thrones of gold :  
Immortal Hebè, fresh with bloom divine,  
The golden goblet crowns with purple wine :  
While the full bowls flow round, the powers employ  
Their careful eyes on long-contending Troy. 6

When Jove, disposed to tempt Saturnia's spleen,  
Thus waked the fury of his partial queen.  
Two powers divine the son of Atreus aid,  
Imperial Juno, and the martial Maid : 10

Ver. 1.] The sentence may be thus literally rendered :

Now on a golden pavement in Jove's hall

The Gods assembled sate.

W.

Ver. 3. *Immortal Hebè.*] The Goddess of Youth is introduced as an attendant upon the banquets of the Gods, to show that the divine Beings enjoy an eternal youth, and that their life is a felicity without end. *Dacier.* P.

Ver. 9. *Two powers divine.*] Jupiter's reproaching these two Goddesses with neglecting to assist Menelaüs, proceeds (as M. Dacier remarks) from the affection he bore to Troy : since if Menelaüs

But high in heaven they sit, and gaze from far,  
 The tame spectators of his deeds of war.  
 Not thus fair Venus helps her favour'd knight,  
 The queen of pleasures shares the toils of fight,  
 Each danger wards, and constant in her care 15  
 Saves in the moment of the last despair.  
 Her act has rescued Paris' forfeit life,  
 Though great Atrides gain'd the glorious strife.  
 Then say, ye powers! what signal issue waits  
 To crown this deed, and finish all the fates? 20  
 Shall heaven by peace the bleeding kingdoms spare,  
 Or rouse the Furies, and awake the war?  
 Yet, would the Gods for human good provide,  
 Atrides soon might gain his beauteous bride,  
 Still Priam's walls in peaceful honours grow, 25  
 And through his gates the crowding nations flow.  
 Thus while he spoke, the queen of heaven, enrag'd,  
 And queen of war, in close consult engag'd:  
 Apart they sit, their deep designs employ,  
 And meditate the future woes of Troy. 30  
 Though secret anger swell'd Minerva's breast,  
 The prudent Goddess yet her wrath suppress;  
 But Juno, impotent of passion, broke  
 Her sullen silence, and with fury spoke.

by their help had gained a complete victory, the siege had been raised, and the city delivered. On the contrary, Juno and Minerva might suffer Paris to escape, as the method to continue the war to the total destruction of Troy. And accordingly a few lines after we find them complotting together, and contriving a new scene of miseries to the Trojans. P.

Ver. 19.] Homer says literally, for this couplet,

Let us consult upon the event of things.

W.



Shall then, O tyrant of the' ethereal reign ! 35  
 My schemes, my labours, and my hopes be vain ?  
 Have I, for this, shook Ilion with alarms,  
 Assembled nations, set two worlds in arms ?  
 To spread the war, I flew from shore to shore ;  
 The' immortal coursers scarce the labour bore. 40  
 At length ripe vengeance o'er their heads impends,  
 But Jove himself the faithless race defends :  
 Loth as thou art to punish lawless lust,  
 Not all the Gods are partial and unjust.

The sire whose thunder shakes the cloudy skies,  
 Sighs from his inmost soul, and thus replies ; 46  
 Oh lasting rancour ! oh insatiate hate  
 To Phrygia's monarch, and the Phrygian state !  
 What high offence has fired the wife of Jove ?  
 Can wretched mortals harm the powers above, 50  
 That Troy and Troy's whole race thou would'st con-  
     found,  
 And yon' fair structures level with the ground ?  
 Haste, leave the skies, fulfil thy stern desire,  
 Burst all her gates, and wrap her walls in fire !  
 Let Priam bleed ! if yet you thirst for more, 55  
 Bleed all his sons, and Ilion float with gore,

Ver. 37.] He should have written,  
*Did I, for this, shake Ilium with alarms,*  
*Assemble nations—:*

and he has very unskilfully expanded *six* lines of his original into *twelve*. W.

Ver. 45.] Homer employs his customary epithet of *cloud-collecting* Jove ; but Dacier has, “ *Le maitre du tonnere.*” And Ogilby is the more true interpreter of his author :

When, much incensed, cloud-gathering Jove begun. W.

Ver. 55. *Let Priam bleed, &c.*] We find in Persius's satyrs the

To boundless vengeance the wide realm be given,  
 'Till vast destruction glut the queen of heaven !  
 So let it be, and Jove his peace enjoy,  
 When heaven no longer hears the name of Troy. 60  
 But should this arm prepare to wreak our hate  
 On thy loved realms, whose guilt demands their fate,  
 Presume not thou the lifted bolt to stay,  
 Remember Troy, and give the vengeance way.

name of Labeo, as an ill poet who made a miserable translation of the Iliad ; one of whose verses is still preserved, and happens to be that of this place,

“ Crudum manduces Priamum, Priamique pisinnos.”

It may seem from this, that his translation was servilely literal (as the old Scholiast on Persius observes). And one cannot but take notice that Ogilby's and Hobbes's in this place are not unlike Labeo's.

Both king and people thou would'st eat alive,

And eat up Priam and his children all.

P.

Notwithstanding this censure upon his predecessors with a view to vindicate himself, we cannot extol the judgment of the poet in not attempting to preserve the bitterness of his original, which his abilities would easily have compassed. Mr. Cowper's version, which is very faithful, will sufficiently rescue the passage from every attempt of ridicule :

Go, make thine entrance at her lofty gates ;

Priam, and all his house, and all his host,

Alive devour : then, haply, thou wilt rest.

W.

Ver. 61. *But should this arm prepare to wreak our hate*

*On thy loved realms.]*

Homer in this place has made Jupiter to prophecy the destruction of Mycenæ the favoured city of Juno, which happened a little before the time of our author. Strab. l. viii. *The Trojan war being over, and the kingdom of Agamemnon destroyed, Mycenæ daily decreased after the return of the Heraclidæ : for these becoming masters of Peloponnesus, cast out the old inhabitants ; so that they who possessed Argos overcame Mycenæ also, and contracted both into one body. A short time after Mycenæ was destroyed by the Argives, and not the least remains of it are now to be found.*

P.



For know, of all the numerous towns that rise      65  
Beneath the rolling sun, and starry skies,  
Which Gods have raised, or earth-born men enjoy ;  
None stands so dear to Jove as sacred Troy.  
No mortals merit more distinguish'd grace  
Than god-like Priam, or than Priam's race.      70  
Still to our name their hecatombs expire,  
And altars blaze with unextinguish'd fire.

At this the Goddess roll'd her radiant eyes,  
Then on the thunderer fix'd them, and replies :  
Three towns are Juno's on the Grecian plains,      75  
More dear than all the' extended earth contains,  
Mycenæ, Argos, and the Spartan wall ;  
These thou may'st raze, nor I forbid their fall :  
'Tis not in me the vengeance to remove ;  
The crime's sufficient that they share my love.      80  
Of power superior why should I complain ?  
Resent I may, but must resent in vain.  
Yet some distinction Juno might require,  
Sprung with thyself from one celestial sire ;  
A Goddess born to share the realms above,      85  
And styled the consort of the thundering Jove ;  
Nor thou a wife and sister's right deny ;  
Let both consent, and both by turns comply ;  
So shall the Gods our joint decrees obey,  
And heaven shall act as we direct the way.      90

Ver. 64.] The peculiar beauty of the original, which our poet has neglected, Mr Cowper ventured to encounter, nor without success :

——Not pleased myself,  
Nor yet unsatisfied, so thou be pleased.      W.

See ready Pallas waits thy high commands,  
 To raise in arms the Greek and Phrygian bands ;  
 Their sudden friendship by her arts may cease,  
 And the proud Trojans first infringe the peace.

The sire of men, and monarch of the sky, 95  
 The' advice approved, and bade Minerva fly,  
 Dissolve the league, and all her arts employ  
 To make the breach the faithless act of Troy.

Fired with the charge, she headlong urged her  
 flight,  
 And shot like lightning from Olympus' height. 100  
 As the red comet, from Saturnius sent  
 To fright the nations with a dire portent,  
 (A fatal sign to armies on the plain,  
 Or trembling sailors on the wintry main)  
 With sweeping glories glides along in air, 105  
 And shakes the sparkles from its blazing hair :  
 Between both armies thus in open sight,  
 Shot the bright Goddess in a trail of light.

Ver. 100.] This simile, an arbitrary addition to his author,  
 is very injudicious, because of that which immediately accompanies  
 it. His translation would have been more faithful thus :

*Jove thus ; when Pallas urged her willing flight,*  
*And shot impetuous from Olympus' height.* W.

Ver. 101.] Homer says literally :

Just like a comet Jove Saturnian sends,  
 Bright sign to sailors, or the spacious tribes  
 Of men on land ; whence sparks innumerable shoot :

but who will deny the amplification of our poet to be grand and  
 elegant? He has borrowed one term from Dacier, who stiles it  
*un signe fatal*. And in justice to my own verbal translation, the  
 reader should be informed, that *σπυρς* here does not mean *an*  
*armed body*, but a *multitude* indiscriminately : see my note on the  
 Eumenides of Æschylus, ver. 1. W.



With eyes erect the gazing host admire 109

The power descending, and the heavens on fire !

The Gods (they cried) the Gods this signal sent,

And Fate now labours with some vast event :

Jove seals the league, or bloodier scenes prepares ;

Jove, the great arbiter of peace and wars ! 114

They said, while Pallas through the Trojan throng,  
(In shape a mortal) pass'd disguised along.

Like bold Laödocus, her course she bent,

Who from Antenor traced his high descent.

Amidst the ranks Lycaön's son she found,

The warlike Pandarus, for strength renown'd ; 120

Whose squadrons, led from black Æsepus' flood,

With flaming shields in martial circle stood.

To him the Goddess : Phrygian ! canst thou hear  
A well-timed counsel with a willing ear !

What praise were thine, could'st thou direct thy dart,

Amidst his triumph, to the Spartan's heart ! 126

What gifts from Troy, from Paris would'st thou  
gain,

Thy country's foe, the Grecian glory slain !

Then seize the' occasion, dare the mighty deed,

Aim at his breast, and may that aim succeed ! 130

But first, to speed the shaft, address thy vow

To Lycian Phœbus with the silver bow,

And swear the firstlings of thy flock to pay

On Zelia's altars, to the God of day.

He heard, and madly at the motion pleas'd, 135

His polish'd bow with hasty rashness seiz'd.

'Twas form'd of horn, and smooth'd with artful toil,

A mountain goat resign'd the shining spoil,





Pallas assists, and (weaken'd in its force) 160  
 Diverts the weapon from it's destin'd course :  
 So from her babe, when slumber seals his eye,  
 The watchful mother wafts the' envenom'd fly.  
 Just where his belt with golden buckles join'd,  
 Where linen folds the double corslet lin'd, 165  
 She turn'd the shaft, which, hissing from above,  
 Pass'd the broad belt, and through the corslet drove ;  
 The folds it pierced, the plaited linen tore,  
 And razed the skin, and drew the purple gore.  
 As when some stately trappings are decreed 170  
 To grace a monarch on his bounding steed,  
 A nymph in Caria or Mæonia bred,  
 Stains the pure ivory with a lively red ;

Ver. 160. *Pallas assists, and (weaken'd in its force)*  
*Diverts the weapon.]*

For she only designed, by all this action, to increase the glory of the Greeks in the taking of Troy : yet some Commentators have been so stupid, as to wonder that Pallas should be employed first in the wounding of Menelaüs, and after in the protecting him. P.

Ver. 170. *As when some stately trappings, &c.]* Some have judged the circumstances of this simile to be superfluous, and think it foreign to the purpose to take notice, that this ivory was intended for the bosses of a bridle, was laid up for a prince, or that a woman of Caria or Mæonia dyed it. Eustathius was of a different opinion, who extols this passage for the variety it presents, and the learning it includes : we learn from hence that the Lydians and Carians were famous in the first times for their staining in purple, and that the women excelled in works of ivory. As also that there were certain ornaments which only kings and princes were privileged to wear. But without having recourse to antiquities to justify this particular, it may be alleged, that the simile does not consist barely in the colours ; it was but little to tell us, that the blood of Menelaüs appearing on the whiteness of his skin, vied with the purple ivory ; but this implies, that the honourable wounds of a hero are the beautiful dress of war, and become him as much as the most gallant ornaments in which he takes the field. P.

With equal lustre various colours vie,  
The shining whiteness, and the Tyrian dye : 175  
So, great Atrides ! show'd thy sacred blood,  
As down thy snowy thigh distill'd the streaming  
flood.

With horror seized, the king of men descried  
The shaft infix'd, and saw the gushing tide :  
Nor less the Spartan fear'd, before he found 180  
The shining barb appear above the wound.  
Then, with a sigh that heaved his manly breast,  
The royal brother thus his grief exprest,  
And grasp'd his hand ; while all the Greeks around  
With answering sighs return'd the plaintive sound.

Oh dear as life ! did I for this agree 186  
The solemn truce, a fatal truce to thee !  
Wert thou exposed to all the hostile train,  
To fight for Greece, and conquer to be slain ?  
The race of Trojans in thy ruin join, 190  
And faith is scorn'd by all the perjurd line.  
Not thus our vows, confirm'd with wine and gore,  
Those hands we plighted, and those oaths we swore,  
Shall all be vain : when heaven's revenge is slow,  
Jove but prepares to strike the fiercer blow. 195  
The day shall come, that great avenging day,  
Which Troy's proud glories in the dust shall lay,

Ver. 174.] What our author has omitted of his original will appear from Ogilby, who is much more faithful :

Then in her chamber locks the well-stain'd bit :

Nobles at any price would purchase it ;

But for the king she keeps this gift so dear,

To grace his horse, and glad his charioteer.

But for a translation still more faithful, and abundantly more elegant, I refer to Mr. Cowper. W.



When Priam's powers and Priam's self shall fall,  
And one prodigious ruin swallow all.  
I see the God, already, from the pole 200  
Bare his red arm, and bid the thunder roll ;  
I see the' Eternal all his fury shed,  
And shake his Ægis o'er their guilty head.  
Such mighty woes on perjur'd princes wait ;  
But thou, alas ! deserv'st a happier fate. 205  
Still must I mourn the period of thy days,  
And only mourn without my share of praise ?  
Deprived of thee, the heartless Greeks no more  
Shall dream of conquests on the hostile shore ;  
Troy seized of Helen, and our glory lost, 210  
Thy bones shall moulder on a foreign coast :  
While some proud Trojan thus insulting cries,  
(And spurns the dust where Menelaüs lies)  
" Such are the trophies Greece from Ilion brings,  
" And such the conquests of her king of kings ! 215  
" Lo his proud vessels scatter'd o'er the main,  
" And, unrevenged, his mighty brother slain."  
Oh ! ere that dire disgrace should blast my fame,  
O'erwhelm me, earth ! and hide a monarch's shame.  
He said : a leader's and a brother's fears 220  
Possess his soul, which thus the Spartan cheers :  
Let not thy words the warmth of Greeks abate ;  
The feeble dart is guiltless of my fate :  
Stiff with the rich embroider'd work around,  
My varied belt repell'd the flying wound. 225

Ver. 200.] This fine couplet is a supplement from our translator, who had in view a passage in the *second ode* of Horace. W.

To whom the king. My brother and my friend,  
 Thus, always thus, may heaven thy life defend!  
 Now seek some skilful hand, whose powerful art  
 May staunch the' effusion, and extract the dart.  
 Herald, be swift, and bid Machaön bring 230  
 His speedy succour to the Spartan king:  
 Pierced with a winged shaft (the deed of Troy)  
 The Grecians' sorrow, and the Dardans' joy.

With hasty zeal the swift Talthybius flies;  
 Through the thick files he darts his searching eyes,  
 And finds Machaön, where sublime he stands 236  
 In arms encircled with his native bands.  
 Then thus: Machaön, to the king repair,  
 His wounded brother claims thy timely care;  
 Pierced by some Lycian or Dardanian bow, 240  
 A grief to us, a triumph to the foe.

The heavy tidings grieved the god-like man;  
 Swift to his succour through the ranks he ran:  
 The dauntless king yet standing firm he found,  
 And all the chiefs in deep concern around. 245  
 Where to the steely point the reed was join'd,  
 The shaft he drew, but left the head behind.

Ver. 230.] Mr. Cowper's version will prove the great inattention of Pope on this occasion:

He ended, and his noble herald, next,  
 Bespake, Talthybius. Haste, call hither quick  
 The son of Æsculapius, leech renown'd,  
 The prince Machaon. W.

Ver. 236.] Thus he might have represented his author more exactly:

And finds Machaon, where *in circling bands*  
*Of Trica, famed for warrior steeds*, he stands. W.



Straight the broad belt, with gay embroidery grac'd,  
 He loosed; the corslet from his breast unbrac'd;  
 Then suck'd the blood, and sovereign balm infus'd,  
 Which Chiron gave, and Æsculapius us'd. 251

While round the prince the Greeks employ their  
 care,

The Trojans rush tumultuous to the war;  
 Once more they glitter in refulgent arms,  
 Once more the fields are fill'd with dire alarms. 255  
 Nor had you seen the king of men appear  
 Confused, unactive, or surprised with fear;  
 But fond of glory, with severe delight,  
 His beating bosom claim'd the rising fight.  
 No longer with his warlike steeds he staid, 260  
 Or press'd the car with polish'd brass inlaid:  
 But left Eurymedon the reins to guide;  
 The fiery coursers snorted at his side.  
 On foot through all the martial ranks he moves,  
 And these encourages, and those reproves. 265  
 Brave men! he cries (to such who boldly dare  
 Urge their swift steeds to face the coming war)  
 Your ancient valour on the foes approve;  
 Jove is with Greece, and let us trust in Jove:

Ver. 253. *The Trojans rush tumultuous to the war.*] They advanced to the enemy in the belief that the shot of Pandarus was made by order of the generals. *Dacier.* P.

Ver. 254.] This is ambiguous, or rather contrary to Homer: he might have said,

*The Greeks in turn put on refulgent arms.* W.

Ver. 263.] After this our poet has neglected two entire verses, which may thus be rudely represented to the reader:

Him strict he charg'd to keep at hand the car,  
 Lest strength should fail him, marshalling the war. W.

'Tis not for us, but guilty Troy to dread, 270  
 Whose crimes sit heavy on her perjured head ;  
 Her sons and matrons Greece shall lead in chains,  
 And her dead warriors strew the mournful plains.  
 Thus with new ardour he the brave inspires ;  
 Or thus the fearful with reproaches fires. 275  
 Shame to your country, scandal of your kind !  
 Born to the fate ye well deserve to find !  
 Why stand you gazing round the dreadful plain,  
 Prepared for flight, but doom'd to fly in vain ?  
 Confused and panting thus, the hunted deer 280  
 Falls as he flies, a victim to his fear.  
 Still must ye wait the foes, and still retire,  
 'Till yon' tall vessels blaze with Trojan fire ?  
 Or trust ye, Jove a valiant foe shall chase,  
 To save a trembling, heartless, dastard race ? 285  
 This said, he stalk'd with ample strides along,  
 To Crete's brave monarch and his martial throng ;  
 High at their head he saw the chief appear,  
 And bold Meriones excite the rear.

Ver. 270.] He might have expressed his author thus :

'Tis not for us, but guilty Troy to dread ;

And soon will vultures tear the perjured dead.

W.

Ver. 283.] This is not from Homer, but Ogilby :

And all our navy blaze with Trojan flame.

The following attempt to show our poet's deviations, will deserve more commendation from the reader for its closeness, than its elegance:

What? idly wait ye, 'till the Trojan band

Reach where our ships are station'd on the strand,

To see if Jove will stretch his aiding hand ?

}

W.

Ver. 288.] Our poet omits and adds at pleasure. The following translation conveys the sense of Homer :



At this the king his generous joy exprest, 290  
And clasp'd the warrior to his armed breast.

Divine Idomeneus ! what thanks we owe  
To worth like thine ! what praise shall we bestow !  
To thee the foremost honours are decreed,  
First in the fight, and every graceful deed. 295

For this, in banquets, when the generous bowls  
Restore our blood, and raise the warriors' souls,  
Though all the rest with stated rules be bound,  
Unmix'd, unmeasured are thy goblets crown'd.  
Be still thyself ; in arms a mighty name ; 300  
Maintain thy honours, and enlarge thy fame.

To whom the Cretan thus his speech addrest ;  
Secure of me, O king ! exhort the rest :  
Fix'd to thy side, in every toil I share,  
Thy firm associate in the day of war. 305  
But let the signal be this moment given ;  
To mix in fight is all I ask of heaven.

These arming round Idomeneus he found :  
In front the chief, of vigour like a boar ;  
The rear, Meriones was urging on.  
Them gladly view'd the king of men, and thus  
With soothing words addrest Idomeneus. W.

Ver. 296. *For this, in banquets.*] The ancients usually in their feasts divided to the guests by equal portions, except when they took some particular occasion to shew distinction, and give the preference to any one person. It was then looked upon as the highest mark of honour to be allotted the best portion of meat and wine, and to be allowed an exemption from the laws of the feast, in drinking wine unmingled and without stint. This custom was much more ancient than the time of the Trojan war, and we find it practised in the banquet given by Joseph to his brethren in Ægypt, Gen. xliii. ver. ult. *And he sent messes to them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs.* Dacier. P.

The field shall prove how perjuries succeed,  
And chains or death avenge their impious deed.

Charm'd with this heat, the King his course pur-  
sues, 310

And next the troops of either Ajax views :

In one firm orb the bands were ranged around,

A cloud of heroes blacken'd all the ground.

Thus from the lofty promontory's brow

A swain surveys the gathering storm below ; 315

Slow from the main the heavy vapours rise,

Spread in dim streams, and sail along the skies,

'Till black as night the swelling tempest shows

The cloud condensing as the West-wind blows :

He dreads the' impending storm, and drives his flock

To the close covert of an arching rock. 321

Such, and so thick, the' embattled squadrons stood,  
With spears erect, a moving iron wood ;

A shady light was shot from glimmering shields,

And their brown arms obscured the dusky fields. 325

O heroes ! worthy such a dauntless train,

Whose godlike virtue we but urge in vain,

(Exclaimed the king) who raise your eager bands

With great examples, more than loud commands.

Ver. 318.] His original says :

——than *pitch* more black.

W.

Ver. 324.] This couplet is almost wholly a gratuitous appendage to his original ; amplified, perhaps, from Ogilby and Chapman. The entire sense of Homer will be tolerably comprized in these two verses :

Thus, dark and close, to war the' embattled train,

Bristling with spears and shields, moved o'er the plain. W.

Ver. 326.] Homer says literally :

Ye chiefs of Argives, clad in brazen mail.

W.



Ah would the Gods but breathe in all the rest 330  
Such souls as burn in your exalted breast !

Soon should our arms with just success be crown'd,  
And Troy's proud walls lie smoking on the ground.

Then to the next the General bends his course ;  
(His heart exults, and glories in his force) 335

There reverend Nestor ranks his Pylian bands,  
And with inspiring eloquence commands ;  
With strictest order sets his train in arms,  
The chiefs advises, and the soldiers warms.

Ver. 335.] Instead of these additions, which weaken the vigour of his author, I should have preferred a brevity, that would only sacrifice connecting terms of no importance to the narrative. As thus:

*From these he comes where Nestor ranks his bands.* W.

Ver. 336. *There reverend Nestor ranks his Pylian bands.*] This is the prince whom Homer chiefly celebrates for martial discipline; of the rest he is content to say they were valiant, and ready to fight: the years, long observation, and experience of Nestor, rendered him the fittest person to be distinguished on this account. The disposition of his troops in this place (together with what he is made to say, that their forefathers used the same method) may be a proof that the art of war was well known in Greece before the time of Homer. Nor indeed can it be imagined otherwise, in an age when all the world made their acquisitions by force of arms only. What is most to be wondered at, is, that they had not the use of *cavalry*, all men engaging either on *foot*, or from *chariots* (a particular necessary to be known by every reader of Homer's battles). In these chariots there were always two persons, one of whom only fought, the other was wholly employed in managing the horses. Madam Dacier, in her excellent preface to Homer, is of opinion, that there were no horsemen till near the time of Saul, threescore years after the siege of Troy; so that although cavalry were in use in Homer's days, yet he thought himself obliged to regard the customs of the age of which he writ, rather than those of his own. P.

Ver. 338.] This couplet is adventitious also, and might be spared without any injury to himself or his author. W.

Alastor, Chromius, Hæmon round him wait,      340  
 Bias the good, and Pelagon the great.  
 The horse and chariots to the front assign'd,  
 The foot (the strength of war) he ranged behind;  
 The middle space suspected troops supply,  
 Inclos'd by both, nor left the power to fly :      345  
 He gives command to curb the fiery steed,  
 Nor cause confusion, nor the ranks exceed ;  
 Before the rest let none too rashly ride ;  
 No strength, nor skill, but just in time be tried :  
 The charge once made, no warrior turn the rein,  
 But fight, or fall ; a firm embodied train.      351  
 He whom the fortune of the field shall cast  
 From forth his chariot, mount the next in haste ;  
 Nor seek unpractis'd to direct the car,  
 Content with javelins to provoke the war.      355  
 Our great forefathers held this prudent course,  
 Thus ruled their ardour, thus preserved their force,  
 By laws like these immortal conquests made,  
 And earth's proud tyrants low in ashes laid.  
 So spoke the master of the martial art,      360  
 And touch'd with transport great Atrides' heart.

Ver. 344. *The middle space suspected troops supply.*] This artifice of placing those men whose behaviour was most to be doubted in the middle (so as to put them under a necessity of engaging even against their inclinations) was followed by Hannibal in the battle of Zama ; as is observed and praised by Polybius, who quotes this verse on that occasion, in acknowledgment of Homer's skill in military discipline. That our author was the first master of that art in Greece, is the opinion of Ælian, *Tactic. c. 1.* Frontinus gives us another example of Pyrrhus king of Epirus's following this instruction of Homer. *Vide Stratag. lib. ii. c. 3.* So Ammianus Marcellinus l. xiv. *Imperator catervis peditum infirmis, medium inter acies spacium, secundum Homericam dispositionem, præstituit. P.*



Oh ! hadst thou strength to match thy brave desires,  
And nerves to second what thy soul inspires !  
But wasting years that wither human race,  
Exhaust thy spirits, and thy arms unbrace. 365  
What once thou wert, oh ever might'st thou be !  
And age the lot of any chief but thee.

Thus to the' experienced prince Atrides cried ;  
He shook his hoary locks, and thus replied.  
Well might I wish, could mortal wish renew 370  
That strength which once in boiling youth I knew ;  
Such as I was, when Ereuthalion slain  
Beneath this arm fell prostrate on the plain.  
But heaven its gifts not all at once bestows, 374  
These years with wisdom crowns, with action those :  
The field of combat fits the young and bold,  
The solemn council best becomes the old ;  
To you the glorious conflict I resign,  
Let sage advice, the palm of age, be mine. 379

He said. With joy the monarch march'd before,  
And found Menestheus on the dusty shore,  
With whom the firm Athenian phalanx stands ;  
And next Ulysses with his subject bands.  
Remote their forces lay, nor knew so far  
The peace infringed, nor heard the sounds of war ;  
The tumult late begun, they stood intent 386  
To watch the motion, dubious of the' event.  
The king, who saw their squadrons yet unmov'd,  
With hasty ardour thus the chiefs reprov'd.

Can Peteus' son forget a warrior's part, 390  
And fears Ulysses, skill'd in every art ?

Why stand you distant, and the rest expect  
 To mix in combat which yourselves neglect?  
 From you 'twas hoped among the first to dare  
 The shock of armies, and commence the war. 395  
 For this your names are call'd, before the rest,  
 To share the pleasures of the genial feast:  
 And can you, chiefs! without a blush survey  
 Whole troops before you labouring in the fray?  
 Say, is it thus those honours you requite? 400  
 The first in banquets, but the last in fight.

Ver. 396.] More exactly thus:

*From you at least, who hear before the rest*

*Our invitations to the genial feast:*

but as the rhyme is inaccurate, the sarcasm of the original might be better preserved by an improvement on Chapman:

But to our feasts ye come before the rest;

Not tardy then; and eat and drink the best.

Our author then omits *two* verses, which partake too much of a sarcastical spirit, that characterises the speech, to be neglected with propriety. Accept this rough delineation of them:

Then ye, carousing, at my board recline,

And quaff at will full bowls of costly wine.

W.

Ver. 398.] There is but small resemblance in these *four* lines to his original, which may be thus exhibited word for word:

Now ye would gladly see ten troops of Greeks

Engage before yourselves with murderous steel.

W.

Ver. 402.] This speech of Ulysses is very ill represented by our poet; and must be read in Cowper by those who wish to see a faithful exhibition of the original. But the reader, perhaps, may expect some representation of it from myself:

O! chief, what censures have escap'd thy teeth?

Call'st thou me slack in war? Whene'er we Greeks

Urge on Troy's warriors the sharp edge of war,

See, if thou wilt, and thus thy soul incline,

The father of Telemachus engag'd

First in the Trojan van. Thy words are vain.

W.



Ulysses heard: the hero's warmth o'erspread  
His cheek with blushes: and severe, he said:  
Take back the' unjust reproach! Behold we stand  
Sheath'd in bright arms, and but expect command.  
If glorious deeds afford thy soul delight, 406  
Behold me plunging in the thickest fight.  
Then give thy warrior-chief a warrior's due,  
Who dares to act whate'er thou darest to view.

Struck with his generous wrath the king replies;  
Oh great in action, and in council wise! 411  
With ours, thy care and ardour are the same,  
Nor need I to command, nor ought to blame.  
Sage as thou art, and learn'd in human kind,  
Forgive the transport of a martial mind. 415  
Haste to the fight, secure of just amends!  
The Gods that make, shall keep the worthy, friends.

He said, and pass'd where great Tydides lay,  
His steeds and chariots wedged in firm array:  
(The warlike Sthenelus attends his side) 420  
To whom with stern reproach the monarch cried;  
Oh son of Tydeus! (he, whose strength could tame  
The bounding steed, in arms a mighty name)  
Can'st thou, remote, the mingling hosts descry,  
With bands unactive, and a careless eye? 425  
Not thus thy sire the fierce encounter fear'd;  
Still first in front the matchless prince appear'd:  
What glorious toils, what wonders they recite  
Who view'd him labouring through the ranks of  
fight!

I saw him once when, gathering martial powers, 430  
A peaceful guest, he sought Mycenæ's towers;

Armies he ask'd, and armies had been given,  
Not we denied, but Jove forbade from heaven ;  
While dreadful comets glaring from afar  
Forewarn'd the horrors of the Theban war. 435  
Next, sent by Greece from where Asopus flows,  
A fearless envoy, he approach'd the foes ;  
Thebes' hostile walls, unguarded and alone,  
Dauntless he enters, and demands the throne.  
The tyrant feasting with his chiefs he found, 440  
And dared to combat all those chiefs around ;  
Dared and subdued, before their haughty lord ;  
For Pallas strung his arm, and edged his sword.  
Stung with the shame, within the winding way,  
To bar his passage fifty warriors lay ; 445  
Two heroes led the secret squadron on,  
Mæon the fierce, and hardy Lycophon ;  
Those fifty slaughtered in the gloomy vale,  
He spared but one to bear the dreadful tale.  
Such Tydeus was, and such his martial fire ; 450  
Gods ! how the son degenerates from his sire !  
No words the godlike Diomed return'd,  
But heard respectful, and in secret burn'd :  
Not so fierce Capaneus' undaunted son,  
Stern as his sire, the boaster thus begun. 455  
What needs, O monarch, this invidious praise,  
Ourselves to lessen, while our sires you raise ?  
Dare to be just, Atrides ! and confess  
Our valour equal, though our fury less.

Ver. 436.] In a triplet, by inserting a line like the following,  
he might have comprehended the full sense of his author :

Where osiers thick, and grass abundant grows.

W.



With fewer troops we storm'd the Theban wall, 460  
And happier saw the sevenfold city fall.

In impious acts the guilty fathers died ;  
The sons subdued, for Heaven was on their side.  
Far more than heirs of all our parents' fame,  
Our glories darken their diminish'd name. 465

To him Tydides thus. My friend forbear,  
Suppress thy passion, and the King revere :  
His high concern may well excuse this rage,  
Whose cause we follow, and whose war we wage ;  
His the first praise, were Ilion's towers o'erthrown,  
And, if we fail, the chief disgrace his own. 470  
Let him the Greeks to hardy toils excite,  
'Tis ours to labour in the glorious fight.

He spoke, and ardent, on the trembling ground  
Sprung from his car ; his ringing arms resound. 475  
Dire was the clang, and dreadful from afar,  
Of arm'd Tydides rushing to the war.

Ver. 460. *We storm'd the Theban wall.*] The first Theban war, of which Agamemnon spoke in the preceding lines, was seven and twenty years before the war of Troy. Sthenelus here speaks of the second Theban war, which happened ten years after the first : when the sons of the seven captains conquered the city, before which their fathers were destroyed. Tydeus expired gnawing the head of his enemy, and Capaneus was thunder-struck while he blasphemed Jupiter. Vid. Stat. Thebaid. P.

Ver. 467.] More exactly, with these alterations :

*Then sternly* thus Tydides : Friend ! forbear ;

*Obey my council, and in silence hear.*

W.

Ver. 474.] The following attempt gives at least the sense of Homer :

He spake : and from his chariot to the ground

Leapt : on the rushing warrior's breast the brass

Clang'd loud, and e'en the bravest might appall.

W.

As when the winds, ascending by degrees,  
 First move the whitening surface of the seas,  
 The billows float in order to the shore, 480  
 The wave behind rolls on the wave before :  
 'Till, with the growing storm, the deeps arise,  
 Foam o'er the rocks, and thunder to the skies—  
 So to the fight the thick battalions throng,  
 Shields urged on shields, and men drove men along.  
 Sedate and silent move the numerous bands ; 486  
 No sound, no whisper, but the chiefs' commands,  
 Those only heard ; with awe the rest obey,  
 As if some God had snatch'd their voice away.  
 Not so the Trojans ; from their host ascends 490  
 A general shout that all the region rends.  
 As when the fleecy flocks unnumber'd stand  
 In wealthy folds, and wait the milker's hand,  
 The hollow vales incessant bleating fills,  
 The lambs reply from all the neighbouring hills : 495  
 Such clamours rose from various nations round,  
 Mix'd was the murmur, and confused the sound.  
 Each host now joins, and each a God inspires,  
 These Mars incites, and those Minerva fires.  
 Pale Flight around, and dreadful Terror reign ;  
 And Discord raging bathes the purple plain ; 501

Ver. 489.] He has here omitted a verse and a half of his original, which may be thus supplied :

The various armour of the marshall'd train,  
 Shot gleamy coruscations through the plain.

And the verse before us runs thus in the original :

—nor wouldst thou have said

These numerous troops had voice within their breasts. W.



Discord ! dire sister of the slaughtering power,  
 Small at her birth, but rising every hour,  
 While scarce the skies her horrid head can bound,  
 She stalks on earth and shakes the world around; 505  
 The nations bleed, where-e'er her steps she turns,  
 The groan still deepens, and the combat burns.

Now shield with shield, with helmet helmet  
 clos'd,  
 To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd,  
 Host against host with shadowy squadrons drew, 510  
 The sounding darts in iron tempests flew.  
 Victors and vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,  
 And shrilling shouts and dying groans arise ;  
 With streaming blood the slippery fields are died,  
 And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide. 515

As torrents roll, increased by numerous rills,  
 With rage impetuous down their echoing hills ;  
 Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,  
 Roar through a thousand channels to the main ;  
 The distant shepherd trembling hears the sound : 520  
 So mix'd both hosts, and so their cries rebound.

The bold Antilochus the slaughter led,  
 The first who struck a valiant Trojan dead :  
 At great Echepolus the lance arrives,  
 Razed his high crest and through his helmet drives ;

Ver. 506.] This is a magnificent couplet, wrought from the following plain materials of his author :

She 'midst them cast the strife of equal war ;

Stalkt through the ranks, and swell'd the groan of men. W.

Ver. 510.] He might easily have conformed more to his original, and have avoided a mere expletive expression :

Host against host with *closing targets* drew.

W.

Warm'd in the brain the brazen weapon lies, 526  
 And shades eternal settle o'er his eyes.  
 So sinks a tower that long assaults had stood  
 Of force and fire; its walls besmear'd with blood.  
 Him the bold \* leader of the Abantian throng 530  
 Seized to despoil, and dragg'd the corpse along :  
 But while he strove to tug the' inserted dart,  
 Agenor's javelin reach'd the hero's heart.  
 His flank, unguarded by his ample shield,  
 Admits the lance : he falls, and spurns the field ; 535  
 The nerves, unbraced, support his limbs no more ;  
 The soul comes floating in a tide of gore.  
 Trojans and Greeks now gather round the slain ;  
 The war renews, the warriors bleed again ;  
 As o'er their prey rapacious wolves engage, 540  
 Man dies on man, and all is blood and rage.  
 In blooming youth fair Simoïsius fell,  
 Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell :  
 Fair Simoïsius, whom his mother bore  
 Amid the flock on silver Simoïs' shore : 545  
 The nymph descending from the hills of Ide,  
 To seek her parents on his flowery side,

\* Elphenor.

Ver. 541.] The latter clause of this verse is adventitious to his model, but might be suggested by Dacier : “ Et remplissent tout d' horreur et de sang.”

Ver. 542. *In blooming youth fair Simoïsius fell.*] This prince received his name from the river Simoïs, on whose banks he was born. It was the custom of the eastern people to give names to their children derived from the most remarkable accidents of their birth. The holy scripture is full of examples of this kind. It is also usual in the Old Testament to compare princes to trees, cedars, &c. as Simoïsius is here resembled to a poplar. Dacier. P.



Brought forth the babe, their common care and  
joy,

And thence from Simoïs named the lovely boy.

Short was his date ! by dreadful Ajax slain 550

He falls, and renders all their cares in vain !

So falls a poplar, that in watery ground

Raised high the head, with stately branches crown'd,

(Fell'd by some artist with his shining steel,

To shape the circle of the bending wheel) 555

Cut down it lies, tall, smooth, and largely spread,

With all its beauteous honours on its head ;

There, left a subject to the wind and rain,

And scorch'd by suns, it withers on the plain.

Thus pierced by Ajax, Simoïsius lies 560

Stretch'd on the shore, and thus neglected dies.

At Ajax Antiphus his javelin threw ;

The pointed lance with erring fury flew,

And Leucus, loved by wise Ulysses, slew.

He drops the corpse of Simoïsius slain, 565

And sinks a breathless carcase on the plain.

This saw Ulysses, and with grief enrag'd

Strode where the foremost of the foes engag'd ;

Arm'd with his spear, he meditates the wound,

In act to throw ; but cautious look'd around. 570

[Ver. 550.] The sense of Homer is not seen in this translation.  
It might be corrected thus :

Short was his date ! he falls by Ajax there,

Nor lives to recompense his parent's care.

And most of what our poet has omitted Ogilby, with alteration,  
will sufficiently discover :

The hero's javelin, to his bosom thrust

And through the shoulder, laid him in the dust.

W.

[Ver. 570.] Our translator might have found, I think, in

Struck at his sight the Trojans backward drew,  
 And trembling heard the javelin as it flew.  
 A chief stood nigh, who from Abydos came,  
 Old Priam's son, Democoön was his name;  
 The weapon enter'd close above his ear, 575  
 Cold through his temples glides the whizzing spear;  
 With piercing shrieks the youth resigns his breath,  
 His eye-balls darken with the shades of death;  
 Ponderous he falls; his clanging arms resound;  
 And his broad buckler rings against the ground. 580  
 Seized with affright the boldest foes appear;  
 Even god-like Hector seems himself to fear;  
 Slow he gave way, the rest tumultuous fled;  
 The Greeks with shouts press on, and spoil the dead;  
 But Phœbus now from Ilion's towering height 585  
 Shines forth reveal'd, and animates the fight.

Chapman a better interpretation of the original phrase *looking around him*, than what he has adopted:

Came close, and lookt about to find an object worth his lance. W.

Ver. 577.] This addition to his author appears to me peculiarly unfortunate. Death, occasioned by the passage of such a spear from such a hero, could not but be instantaneous, and would afford, I should presume, no leisure for *piercing shrieks*. W.

Ver. 581.] All the original might be convey'd in *two* lines:

The foremost chiefs and Hector shrink with dread:

The Greeks with shouts press on, and *drag* the dead. W.

Ver. 585. *But Phœbus now.*] Homer here introduces Apollo on the side of the Trojans: he had given them the assistance of Mars at the beginning of this battle; but Mars (which signifies courage without conduct) proving too weak to resist Minerva (or, courage with conduct) which the poet represents as constantly aiding his Greeks; they want some prudent management to rally them again: he therefore brings in a Wisdom to assist Mars, under the appearance of Apollo. 77P.



Trojans be bold, and force with force oppose ;  
Your foaming steeds urge headlong on the foes !  
Nor are their bodies rocks, nor ribb'd with steel ;  
Your weapons enter, and your strokes they feel. 590  
Have ye forgot what seem'd your dread before ?  
The great, the fierce Achilles fights no more.

Apollo thus from Ilion's lofty towers  
Array'd in terrors roused the Trojan powers :  
While War's fierce Goddess fires the Grecian foe, 595  
And shouts and thunders in the fields below.  
Then Great Diores fell, by doom divine,  
In vain his valour, and illustrious line.  
A broken rock the force of Pirus threw,  
(Who from cold Ænus led the Thracian crew) 600  
Full on his ankle dropt the ponderous stone,  
Burst the strong nerves, and crash'd the solid bone :  
Supine he tumbles on the crimson sands, }  
Before his helpless friends, and native bands, }  
And spreads for aid his unavailing hands. 605 }  
The foe rush'd furious as he pants for breath,  
And through his navel drave the pointed death :  
His gushing entrails smoak'd upon the ground,  
And the warm life came issuing from the wound.

His lance bold Thoas at the conqueror sent, 610  
Deep in his breast above the pap it went,  
Amid the lungs was fixed the winged wood,  
And quivering in his heaving bosom stood :  
'Till from the dying chief, approaching near,  
The' Ætolian warrior tugg'd his weighty spear: 615  
Then sudden waved his flaming faulchion round,  
And gash'd his belly with a ghastly wound.

The corpse now breathless on the bloody plain,  
To spoil his arms the victor strove in vain ;  
The Thracian bands against the victor prest ; 620  
A grove of lances glitter'd at his breast.  
Stern Thoas, glaring with revengeful eyes,  
In sullen fury slowly quits the prize,

Thus fell two heroes ; one the pride of Thrace,  
And one the leader of the' Epeian race ;  
Death's sable shade at once o'ericast their eyes,  
In dust the vanquish'd and the victor lies.

With copious slaughter all the fields are red,  
And heap'd with growing mountains of the dead.

Had some brave chief this martial scene beheld, 630  
By Pallas guarded through the dreadful field,  
Might darts be bid to turn their points away,  
And swords around him innocently play ;  
The war's whole art with wonder had he seen,  
And counted heroes where he counted men. 635

So fought each host, with thirst of glory fir'd,  
And crowds on crowds triumphantly expir'd.

Ver. 626.] These four noble lines are constructed from one of his author:

Warriors in crowds around these chiefs were slain.



AN  
E S S A Y  
ON  
HOMER'S BATTLES.

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PERHAPS it may be necessary in this place, at the opening of Homer's battles, to premise some observations upon them in general. I shall first endeavour to show the *conduct* of the poet herein, and next collect some *antiquities*, that tend to a more distinct understanding of those descriptions which make so large a part of the poem.

One may very well apply to Homer himself, what he says of his heroes at the end of the fourth book, that who-soever should be guided through his battles by Minerva, and pointed to every scene of them, would see nothing through the whole but subjects of surprise and applause. When the reader reflects that no less than the compass of twelve books is taken up in these, he will have reason to wonder by what methods our author could prevent descriptions of such a length from being tedious. It is not enough to say, that though the subject itself be the same, the actions are always different; that we have now distinct combats, now promiscuous fights, now single duels, now general engagements; or that the scenes are perpetually varied; we are now in the fields, now at the fortification of the Greeks, now at the ships, now at the gates of Troy, now at the river

Scamander: but we must look farther into the art of the poet, to find the reasons of this astonishing variety.

We may first observe that diversity in the *deaths* of his *warriors*, which he has supplied by the vastest fertility of invention. These he distinguishes several ways; sometimes by the *characters* of the men, their *age*, *office*, *profession*, *nation*, *family*, &c. One is a blooming *youth*, whose father dissuaded him from the war; one is a *priest*, whose piety could not save him; one is a *sportsman*, whom Diana taught in vain; one is the native of a far-distant *country*, who is never to return; one is descended from a *noble line*, which ends in his death; one is made remarkable by his *boasting*; another by his *beseeching*; and another, who is distinguished no way else, is marked by his *habit*, and the singularity of his armour.

Sometimes he varies these deaths by the several *postures* in which his heroes are represented either fighting or falling. Some of these are so exceedingly *exact*, that one may guess from the very position of the combatant, whereabouts the wound will light: others so very *peculiar* and *uncommon*, that they could only be the effect of an imagination which had searched through all the ideas of nature. Such is that picture of Mydon in the fifth book, whose arm being numbed by a blow on the elbow, drops the reins that trail on the ground; and then being suddenly struck on the temples, falls headlong from the chariot in a soft and deep place; where he sinks up to the shoulders in the sands, and continues a while fixed by the weight of his armour, with his legs quivering in the air, till he is trampled down by his horses.

Another cause of this variety is the difference of the *wounds* that are given in the Iliad: they are by no means like the wounds described by most other poets, which are commonly made in the self-same obvious places: the heart and head serve for all those in general who understand no



anatomy, and sometimes for variety they kill men by wounds that are no where mortal but in their poems. As the whole human body is the subject of these, so nothing is more necessary to him who would describe them well, than a thorough knowledge of its structure, even though the poet is not professedly to write of them as an anatomist; in the same manner as an exact skill in anatomy is necessary to those painters that would excel in drawing the naked, though they are not to make any muscle as visible as in a book of chirurgery. It appears from so many passages in Homer that he was perfectly master of this science, that it would be needless to cite any in particular. One may only observe, that if we thoroughly examine all the wounds he has described, though so infinite in number, and so many ways diversified, we shall hardly find one which will contradict this observation.

I must just add a remark, That the various periphrases and circumlocutions by which Homer expresses the single act of *dying*, have supplied Virgil and the succeeding poets with all their manners of phrasing it. Indeed, he repeats the same verse on that occasion more often than they ———— τὸν δὲ σκότος ὅσσ' ἐκάλυψε ———— Ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ, &c. But though it must be owned he had more frequent occasions for a line of this kind than any poet, as no other has described half so many deaths, yet one cannot ascribe this to any sterility of expression, but to the genius of his times, that delighted in those reiterated verses. We find repetitions of the same sort affected by the sacred writers, such as *He was gathered to his people; He slept with his fathers*; and the like. And upon the whole they have a certain antiquated harmony, not unlike the burthen of a song, which the ear is willing to suffer, and as it were rests upon.

As the perpetual horror of combats, and a succession of images of death, could not but keep the imagination very

much on the stretch; Homer has been careful to contrive such reliefs and pauses, as might divert the mind to some other scene, without losing sight of his principal object. His *comparisons* are the more frequent on this account; for a *comparison* serves this end the most effectually of any thing, as it is at once correspondent to, and differing from the subject. Those criticks who fancy that the use of comparisons distracts the attention, and draws it from the first image which should most employ it, (as that we lose the idea of the *battle* itself while we are led by a simile to that of a *deluge* or a *storm* :) those, I say, may as well imagine we lose the thought of the sun, when we see his reflection in the water, where he appears more distinctly, and is contemplated more at ease, than if we gazed directly at his beams. For it is with the eye of the imagination as it is with our corporeal eye, it must sometimes be taken off from the object in order to see it the better. The same criticks that are displeased to have their fancy distracted (as they call it) are yet so inconsistent with themselves as to object to Homer that his similes are too much alike, and are too often derived from the same animal. But is it not more reasonable (according to their own notion) to compare the same man always to the same animal, than to see him sometimes a sun, sometimes a tree, and sometimes a river? Though Homer speaks of the same creature, he so diversifies the circumstances and accidents of the comparisons, that they always appear quite different. And to say truth, it is not so much the animal or the thing, as the action or posture of them that employs our imagination: two different animals in the same action are more like to each other, than one and the same animal is to himself, in two different actions. And those who in reading Homer are shocked that it is always a *lion*, may as well be angry that it is always a *man*.

What may seem more exceptionable, is his inserting the



same comparisons, in the same words at length, upon different occasions; by which management he makes one single image afford many ornaments to several parts of the poem. But may not one say Homer is in this like a skilful improver, who places a beautiful statue in a well-disposed garden so as to answer several vistas, and by that artifice one single figure seems multiplied into as many objects as there are openings from whence it may be viewed?

What farther relieves and softens these descriptions of battles, is the poet's wonderful art of introducing many pathetic circumstances about the deaths of the heroes, which raise a different movement in the mind from what those images naturally inspire, I mean compassion and pity; when he causes us to look back upon the lost riches, possessions, and hopes of those who die: when he transports us to their native countries and paternal seats, to see the griefs of their aged fathers, the despair and tears of their widows, or the abandoned condition of their orphans. Thus when Protesilaus falls, we are made to reflect on the lofty palaces he left half-finished; when the sons of Phænops are killed, we behold the mortifying distress of their wealthy father, who saw his estate divided before his eyes, and taken in trust for strangers. When Axylus dies, we are taught to compassionate the hard fate of that generous and hospitable man, whose house was the house of all men, and who deserved that glorious elogy of *The friend of human kind*.

It is worth taking notice too, what use Homer every where makes of each little accident or circumstance that can naturally happen in a battle, thereby to cast a variety over his action; as well as of every turn of mind or emotion a hero can possibly feel, such as resentment, revenge, concern, confusion, &c. The former of these makes his work resemble a large history-piece, where even the less important figures

and actions have yet some convenient place or corner to be shown in; and the latter gives it all the advantages of tragedy, in those various turns of passion that animate the speeches of his heroes, and render his whole poem the most *dramatick* of any Epick whatsoever.

It must also be observed, that the constant *machines* of the Gods conduce very greatly to vary these long battles, by a continual change of the scene from earth to heaven. Homer perceived them too necessary for this purpose, to abstain from the use of them even after Jupiter had enjoined the Deities not to act on either side. It is remarkable how many methods he has found to draw them into every book: where if they dare not assist the warriors, at least they are very helpful to the poet.

But there is nothing that more contributes to the variety, surprise, and *eclat* of Homer's battles, or is more perfectly admirable in itself, than that artful manner of taking measure, or (as one may say) *gaging* his heroes by each other, and thereby elevating the character of one person, by the opposition of it to that of some other whom he is made to excel. So that he many times describes one only to image another, and raises one only to *raise* another. I cannot better exemplify this remark, than by giving an instance in the character of Diomed that lies before me. Let us observe by what a scale of oppositions he elevates this hero, in the fifth book, first to excel all human valour, and after to rival the Gods themselves. He distinguishes him first from the Grecian captains in general, each of whom he represents conquering a single Trojan, while Diomed constantly encounters two at once; and while they are engaged each in his distinct post, he only is drawn fighting in every quarter, and slaughtering on every side. Next he opposes him to Pandarus, next to Æneas, and then to Hector. So of the Gods, he shows him first against Venus, then Apollo, then Mars, and lastly in the eighth book against Jupiter himself



in the midst of his thunders. The same conduct is observable more or less in regard to every personage of his work.

This subordination of the Heroes is one of the causes that make each of his battles rise above the other in greatness, terror, and importance, to the end of the poem. If Diomed has performed all these wonders in the first combats, it is but to raise Hector, at whose appearance he begins to fear. If in the next battles Hector triumphs not only over Diomed, but over Ajax and Patrocles, sets fire to the fleet, wins the armour of Achilles, and singly eclipses all the heroes; in the midst of all his glory Achilles appears, and Hector flies, and is slain.

The manner in which his Gods are made to act, no less advances the gradation we are speaking of. In the first battles they are seen only in short and separate excursions: Venus assists Paris; Minerva, Diomed; or Mars, Hector. In the next, a clear stage is left for Jupiter, to display his omnipotence, and turn the fate of armies alone. In the last, all the powers of heaven are engaged and bandied into regular parties, Gods encountering Gods, Jove encouraging them with his thunders, Neptune raising his tempests, heaven flaming, earth trembling, and Pluto himself starting from the throne of hell.

II. I am now to take notice of some customs of *antiquity* relating to the *arms* and *art military* of those times, which are proper to be known, in order to form a right notion of our author's descriptions of war.

That Homer copied the manners and customs of the age he writ of, rather than of that he lived in, has been observed in some instances. As that he no where represents *cavalry* or *trumpets* to have been used in the Trojan wars, though they apparently were in his own time. It is not therefore impossible but there may be found in his works some deficiencies in the art of war, which are not to be imputed to his ignorance, but to his judgment.

*Horses* had not been brought into Greece long before the siege of Troy. They were originally Eastern animals, and if we find at that very period so great a number of them reckoned up in the wars of the Israelites, it is the less a wonder, considering they came from Asia. The practice of riding them was so little known in Greece a few years before, that they looked upon the Centaurs who first used it, as monsters compounded of men and horses. Nestor in the first Iliad says, he had seen these Centaurs in his youth, and Polypoetes in the second is said to have been born on the day that his father expelled them from Pelion to the deserts of Æthica. They had no other use of horses than to draw their chariots in battle; so that whenever Homer speaks of *fighting from a horse, taming a horse*, or the like, it is constantly to be understood of fighting from a chariot, or taming horses to that service. This (as we said) was a piece of decorum in the poet; for in his own time they were arrived to such a perfection in horsemanship, that in the fifteenth Iliad, ver. 822, we have a simile taken from an extraordinary feat of activity, where one man manages four horses at once, and leaps from the back of one to another at full speed.

If we consider in what high esteem among warriors these noble animals must have been at their first coming into Greece, we shall the less wonder at the frequent occasions Homer has taken to describe and celebrate them. It is not so strange to find them set almost upon a level with men, at the time when a *horse* in the prizes was of equal value with a *captive*.

The *chariots* were in all probability very low. For we frequently find in the Iliad, that a person who stands erect on a chariot is killed (and sometimes by a stroke on the head) by a foot-soldier with a sword. This may farther appear from the ease and readiness with which they alight or mount on every occasion: to facilitate which, the chariots



were made open behind. That the wheels were but small, may be guessed from a custom they had of taking them off and setting them on, as they were laid by, or made use of. Hebe in the fifth book puts on the wheels of Juno's chariot, when she calls for it in haste: and it seems to be with allusion to the same practice that it is said in Exodus, chap. xiv. *The Lord took off their chariot-wheels, so that they drave them heavily.* The sides were also low; for whoever is killed in his chariot throughout the poem, constantly falls to the ground, as having nothing to support him. That the whole machine was very small and light, is evident from a passage in the tenth Iliad, where Diomed debates whether he shall draw the chariot of Rhesus out of the way, or carry it on his shoulders to a place of safety. All the particulars agree with the representations of the chariots on the most ancient Greek coins; where the tops of them reach not so high as the backs of the horses, the wheels are yet lower, and the heroes who stand in them are seen from the knee upwards\*. This may serve to show those criticks are under a mistake, who blame Homer for making his warriors sometimes retire behind their chariots, as if it were a piece of cowardice: which was as little disgraceful then, as it is now to alight from one's horse in a battle, on any necessary emergency.

There are generally two persons in each chariot, one of whom was wholly employed in guiding the horses. They used indifferently two, three, or four horses: from hence it happens, that sometimes when a horse is killed, the hero continues the fight with the two or more that remain; and at other times a warrior retreats upon the loss of one; not that he has less courage than the other, but that he has fewer horses.

Their *swords* were all broad cutting swords, for we find

\* See the collection of Goltzius, &c.

they never stab but with their spears. The *spears* were used two ways, either to push with, or to cast from them, like the missive javelins. It seems surprising, that a man should throw a dart or spear with such force, as to pierce through both sides of the armour and the body (as is often described in Homer). For if the strength of the men was gigantick, the armour must have been strong in proportion. Some solution might be given for this, if we imagined the armour was generally brass, and the weapons pointed with iron; and if we could fancy that Homer called the spears and swords *brazen*, in the same manner that he calls the reins of a bridle *ivory*, only from the ornaments about them. But there are passages where the point of the spear is expressly said to be of brass, as in the description of that of Hector in Iliad vi. Pausanias Laconicis takes it for granted, that the arms, as well offensive as defensive, were brass. He says the spear of Achilles was kept in his time in the temple of Minerva, the top and point of which were brass; and the sword of Meriones, in that of Æsculapius among the Nicomedians, was entirely of the same metal. But be it as it will, there are examples even at this day of such a prodigious force in casting darts, as almost exceeds credibility. The Turks and Arabs will pierce through thick planks with darts of hardened wood; which can only be attributed to their being bred (as the ancients were) to that exercise, and to the strength and agility acquired by a constant practice of it.

We may ascribe to the same cause their power of casting *stones* of a vast weight, which appears a common practice in these battles. Those are in a great error, who imagine this to be only a fictitious embellishment of the poet, which was one of the exercises of war among the ancient Greeks and Orientals. \* St. Jerome tells us, it was an old custom

\* Mos est in urbibus Palæstinæ, et usque hodie per omnem Judæam vetus consuetudo servatur, ut in viculis, oppidis, et castellis, rotundi



in Palestine, and in use in his own time, to have round stones of a great weight kept in the castles and villages, for the youth to try their strength with. And the custom is yet extant in some parts of Scotland, where stones for the same purpose are laid at the gates of great houses, which they call *putting-stones*.

Another consideration which will account for many things that may seem uncouth in Homer, is the reflection that before the use of *fire-arms*, there was infinitely more scope for *personal valour* than in the modern battles. Now whenever the personal strength of the combatants happened to be unequal, the declining a single combat could not be so dishonourable as it is in this age, when the arms we make use of put all men on a level. For a soldier of far inferior strength may manage a rapier or fire-arms so expertly, as to be an overmatch to his adversary. This may appear a sufficient excuse for what in the modern construction might seem cowardice in Homer's heroes, when they avoid engaging with others, whose bodily strength exceeds their own. The maxims of valour in all times were founded upon reason, and the cowardice ought rather in this case to be imputed to him who braves his inferior. There was also more *leisure* in their battles before the knowledge of fire-arms; and this in a good degree accounts for those *harangues* his heroes make to each other in the time of combat.

There was another practice frequently used by these ancient warriors, which was to spoil an enemy of his arms after they had slain him; and this custom we see them frequently pursuing with such eagerness, as if they looked on their victory not complete till this point was gained. Some

ponantur lapides gravissimi ponderis, ad quos juvenes exercere se solent, et eos pro varietate virium sublevare, alii ad genua, alii ad umbilicum, alii ad humeros, alii ad caput; nonnulli super verticem, rectis junctisque manibus, magnitudinem virium demonstrantes, pondus attollunt.

modern criticks have accused them of avarice on account of this practice, which might probably arise from the great value and scarceness of armour in that early time and infancy of war. It afterwards became a point of honour, like gaining a standard from the enemy. Moses and David speak of the pleasure of obtaining many spoils. They preserved them as monuments of victory, and even religion at last became interested herein, when those spoils were consecrated in the temples of the tutelar Deities of the conqueror.

The reader may easily see, I set down these heads just as they occur to my memory, and only as hints to farther observations; which any one who is conversant in Homer cannot fail to make, if he will but think a little in the same track.

It is no part of my design to enquire what progress had been made in the *art of war* at this early period: the bare perusal of the *Iliad* will best inform us of it. But what I think tends more immediately to the better comprehension of these descriptions, is to give a short view of the *scene* of war, the *situation of Troy*, and those places which Homer mentions, with the proper *field* of each battle: putting together, for this purpose, those passages in my author that give any light to this matter.

The ancient city of Troy stood at a greater distance from the sea, than those ruins which have since been shewn for it. This may be gathered from *Iliad* v. ver. (of the original) 791, where it is said, that the Trojans never durst sally out of the walls of their town, till the retirement of Achilles; but afterwards combated the Grecians at their very ships, *far from the city*. For had Troy stood (as Strabo observes) so nigh the *sea-shore*, it had been madness in the Greeks not to have built any fortification before their fleet till the tenth year of their siege, when the enemy was so near them: and on the other hand, it had been cowardice



in the Trojans not to have attempted any thing all that time, against an army that lay unfortified and unintrenched. Besides the intermediate space had been too small to afford a field for so many various adventures and actions of war. The places about Troy particularly mentioned by Homer lie in this order.

1. The *Scæan gate*. This opened to the field of battle, and was that through which the Trojans made their excursions. Close to this stood the *beech-tree*, sacred to Jupiter, which Homer generally mentions with it.

2. The *hill of wild fig-trees*. It joined to the walls of Troy on one side, and extended to the highway on the other. The first appears from what Andromache says in Iliad vi. ver. 432, that *the walls were in danger of being scaled from this hill*; and the last from Il. xxii. ver. 145, &c.

3. The *two springs of Scamander*. These were a little higher on the same highway. (Ibid.)

4. Callicolone, the name of a pleasant hill, that lay near the river Simois, on the other side of the town. Il. xx. ver. 53.

5. Bateia, or the sepulchre of Myrinne, stood a little before the city in the plain. Il. ii. ver. 318 of the Catalogue.

6. The *monument of Ilus*: near the middle of the plain. Il. xi. ver 166.

7. The tomb of Æsyetes commanded the prospect of the fleet, and that part of the sea coast. Il. ii. ver. 301, of the Catalogue.

It seems by the 368th verse of the second Iliad, that the Grecian army was drawn up under the several leaders by the banks of Scamander, on that side towards the ships: in the mean time that of Troy and the auxiliaries was ranged in order at Myrinne's sepulchre. Ibid. ver. 320, of the Catalogue. The place of the *first battle*, where Diomed performs his exploits, was near the joining of Simois and Scamander: for Juno and Pallas coming to him, alight at

the confluence of those rivers. Il. v. ver. 773, and that the Greeks had not yet past the stream, but fought on that side next the fleet, appears from ver. 791 of the same book, where Juno says *the Trojans now brave them at their very ships*. But in the beginning of the sixth book, the place of battle is specified to be between the rivers of Simois and Scamander; so that the Greeks (though Homer does not particularize when, or in what manner) had then crossed the stream toward Troy.

The engagement in the eighth book is evidently close to the Grecian fortification on the shore. That night Hector lay at Ilus's tomb in the field, as Dolon tells us, Lib. x. ver. 415. And in the eleventh book the battle is chiefly about Ilus's tomb.

In the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, about the fortification of the Greeks, and in the fifteenth at the *ships*.

In the sixteenth, the Trojans being repulsed by Patroclus, they engage between the fleet, the river, and the Grecian wall: see ver. 396. Patroclus still advancing, they fight at the gates of Troy, ver. 700. In the seventeenth, the fight about the body of Patroclus is under the Trojan wall, ver. 403. His body being carried off, Hector and Æneas pursue the Greeks to the fortification, ver. 760. And in the eighteenth, upon Achilles's appearing, they retire and encamp without the fortification.

In the twentieth, the fight is still on that side next the sea; for the Trojans being pursued by Achilles, pass over the Scamander as they run toward Troy: see the beginning of book xxi. The following battles are either in the river itself, or between that and the city, under whose walls Hector is killed in the twenty-second book, which puts an end to the battles of the Iliad.

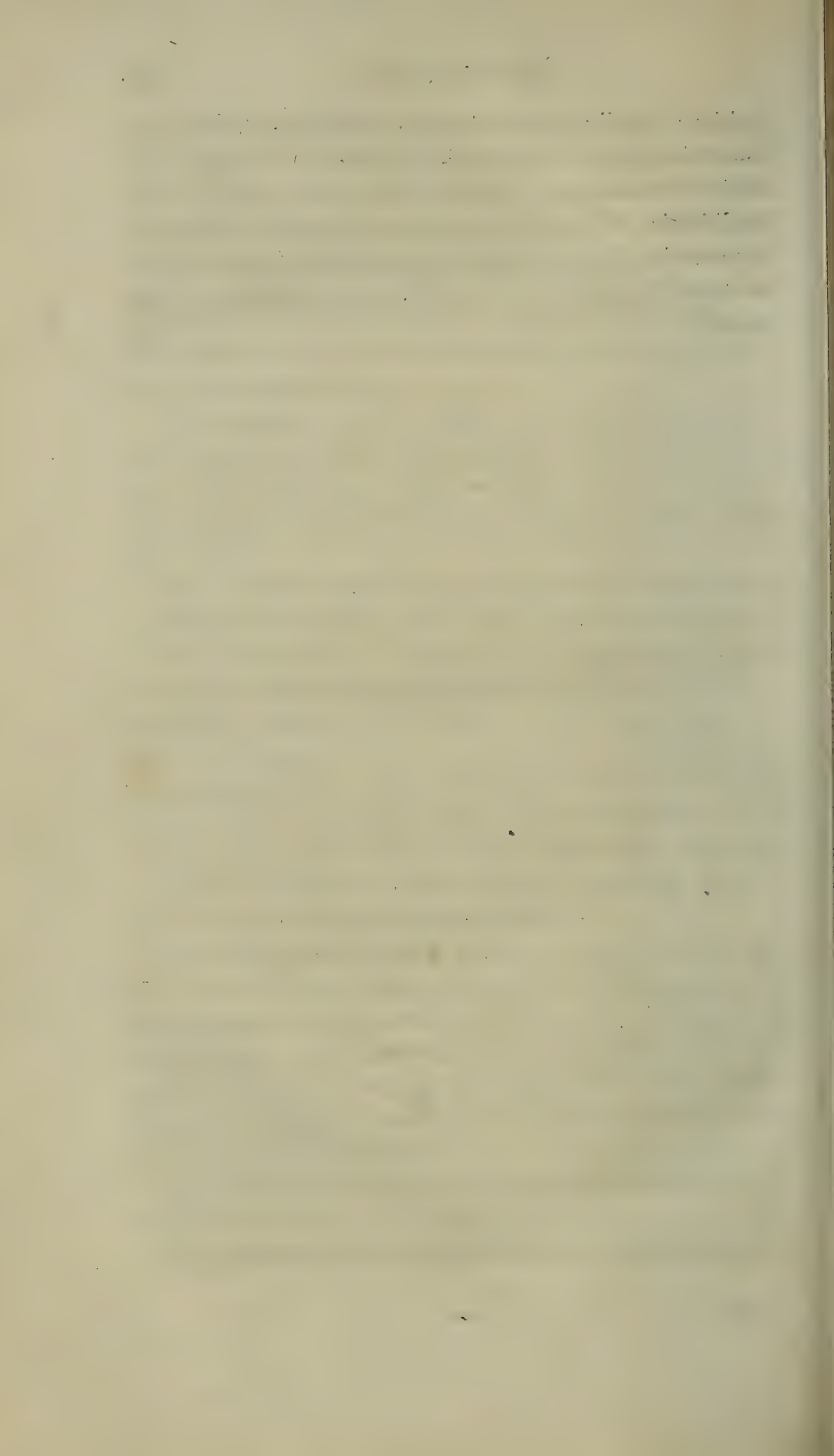
N. B. *The verses above are cited according to the number of lines in the Greek.* P.

The preceding essay is a very pleasing and judicious com-



position; equally commendable for pertinence of remark, a neat simplicity of expression, elegance of thought, and felicity of illustration: and may serve as an admirable exemplification of a sentiment somewhere delivered by himself, that none but a poet is completely qualified to become a commentator to another poet; such are the sympathies of real genius!

W.





THE  
FIFTH BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

## THE ARGUMENT.

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### THE ACTS OF DIOMED.

*DIOMED*, assisted by *Pallas*, performs wonders in this day's battle. *Pandarus* wounds him with an arrow, but the Goddess cures him, enables him to discern Gods from mortals, and prohibits him from contending with any of the former, excepting *Venus*. *Æneas* joins *Pandarus* to oppose him, *Pandarus* is killed, and *Æneas* in great danger but for the assistance of *Venus*; who, as she is removing her son from the fight, is wounded on the hand by *Diomed*. *Apollo* seconds her in his rescue, and at length carries off *Æneas* to *Troy*, where he is healed in the Temple of *Pergamus*. *Mars* rallies the *Trojans*, and assists *Hector* to make a stand. In the mean time *Æneas* is restored to the field, and they overthrow several of the *Greeks*; among the rest *Tlepolemus* is slain by *Sarpedon*. *Juno* and *Minerva* descend to resist *Mars*; the latter incites *Diomed* to go against that God; he wounds him, and sends him groaning to Heaven.

The first battle continues through this book. The scene is the same as in the former.

P.



THE  
FIFTH BOOK  
OF THE  
I L I A D.

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**B**UT Pallas now Tydides' soul inspires,  
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires,  
Above the Greeks his deathless fame to raise,  
And crown her hero with distinguish'd praise.

Ver. 1. *Tydides.*] That we may enter into the spirit and beauty of this book, it will be proper to settle the true *character* of Diomed, who is the hero of it. Achilles is no sooner retired, but Homer raises his other Greeks to supply his absence; like stars that shine each in his due revolution, till the principal hero rises again, and eclipses all others. As Diomed is the first in this office, he seems to have more of the character of Achilles than any besides. He has naturally an excess of boldness, and too much fury in his temper; forward and intrepid like the other, and running after Gods or men promiscuously as they offer themselves. But what differences his character is, that he is soon reclaimed by advice, hears those that are more experienced, and in a word, obeys Minerva in all things. He is assisted by the patroness of wisdom and arms, as he is eminent both for prudence and valour. That which characterises his prudence, is a quick sagacity and presence of mind in all emergencies, and an undisturbed readiness in the very article of danger. And what is particular in his valour is agreeable to these qualities; his actions being always performed

High on his helm celestial lightnings play, 5  
 His beamy shield emits a living ray ;  
 The' unwearied blaze incessant streams supplies,  
 Like the red star that fires the' autumnal skies,  
 When fresh he rears his radiant orb to sight,  
 And bathed in Ocean, shoots a keener light. 10  
 Such glories Pallas on the chief bestow'd,  
 Such, from his arms, the fierce effulgence flow'd :  
 Onward she drives him, furious to engage,  
 Where the fight burns, and where the thickest rage.  
 The sons of Dares first the combat sought, 15  
 A wealthy priest, but rich without a fault ;

with remarkable dexterity, activity, and dispatch. As the gentle and manageable turn of his mind seems drawn with an opposition to the boisterous temper of Achilles, so his bodily excellencies seem designed as in contrast to those of Ajax, who appears with great strength, but heavy and unwieldy. As he is forward to act in the field, so he is ready to speak in the council : but 'tis observable that his councils still incline to war, and are biassed rather on the side of bravery than caution. Thus he advises to reject the proposals of the Trojans in the seventh book, and not to accept of Helen herself, though Paris should offer her. In the ninth he opposes Agamemnon's proposition to return to Greece, in so strong a manner, as to declare he will stay and continue the siege himself if the general should depart. And thus he hears, without concern Achilles's refusal of a reconciliation, and doubts not to be able to carry on the war without him. As for his private character, he appears a gallant lover of hospitality in his behaviour to Glaucus in the sixth book : a lover of wisdom in his assistance of Nestor in the eighth, and his choice of Ulysses to accompany him in the tenth : upon the whole, an open sincere friend, and a generous enemy. P.

Ver. 9.] The original of this fine couplet is only this :

And shines most bright, when bathed in ocean's wave. W.

Ver. 11.] Homer has only a single verse and a single clause, to this effect :

So clear a light his head and shoulders flamed. W.



In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,  
 The sons to toils of glorious battle bred ;  
 These singled from their troops the fight maintain,  
 These from their steeds, Tydides on the plain. 20  
 Fierce for renown the brother chiefs draw near,  
 And first bold Phegeus cast his sounding spear,  
 Which o'er the warrior's shoulder took its course,  
 And spent in empty air its erring force.  
 Not so, Tydides, flew thy lance in vain, 25  
 But pierced his breast, and stretch'd him on the plain.  
 Seized with unusual fear, Idæus fled,  
 Left the rich chariot, and his brother dead.  
 And had not Vulcan lent celestial aid,  
 He too had sunk to death's eternal shade ; 30  
 But in a smoky cloud the God of fire  
 Preserved the son in pity to the sire.  
 The steeds and chariot, to the navy led,  
 Encreased the spoils of gallant Diomed.

Struck with amaze and shame, the Trojan crew  
 Or slain, or fled, the sons of Dares view ; 36  
 When by the blood-stain'd hand Minerva prest  
 The God of battles, and this speech address.

Stern power of war ! by whom the mighty fall,  
 Who bathe in blood, and shake the lofty wall ! 40

Ver. 26.] The latter clause of this verse is not in Homer, but was supplied by Dacier : “ Il va donner dans l'estomach de Phegée *qu' il étend mort sur la poussière.*” W.

Ver 31.] Homer only says, *covered him in darkness* ; and this allusion to Vulcan's occupation degrades the passage. W.

Ver. 40. *Who bathe in blood.*] It may seem something unnatural, that Pallas, at a time when she is endeavouring to work upon Mars under the appearance of benevolence and kindness, should make use

Let the brave chiefs their glorious toils divide ;  
 And whose the conquest mighty Jove decide ;  
 While we from interdicted fields retire,  
 Nor tempt the wrath of heaven's avenging Sire.

Her words allay'd the' impetuous warrior's heat,  
 The God of arms and martial Maid retreat ; 46  
 Removed from fight, on Xanthus' flowery bounds  
 They sat, and listen'd to the dying sounds.

Meantime, the Greeks the Trojan race pursue,  
 And some bold chieftain every leader slew : 50

of terms which seem so full of bitter reproaches ; but these will appear very properly applied to this warlike Deity. For persons of this martial character, who scorning equity and reason, carry all things by force, are better pleased to be celebrated for their power than their virtue. Statues are raised to the conquerors, that is, the destroyers of nations, who are complimented for excelling in the arts of ruin. Demetrius the son of Antigonus was celebrated by his flatterers with the title of Poliorcetes, a term equivalent to the one here made use of. P.

More correctly in the *first* edition :

Who *bath'st* in blood, and *shak'st* the lofty wall. W.

Ver. 46.] *The God of arms and martial Maid retreat.*] The retreat of Mars from the Trojans intimates that courage forsook them: it may be said then, that Minerva's absence from the Greeks will signify that wisdom deserted them also. It is true she does desert them ; but it is at a time when there was more occasion for gallant actions than for wise counsels. *Eustathius.* P.

Ver. 49. *The Greeks the Trojan race pursue.*] Homer always appears very zealous for the honour of Greece, which alone might be a proof of his being of that country, against the opinions of those who would have him of other nations.

It is observable through the whole Iliad that he endeavours every where to represent the Greeks as superior to the Trojans in valour and the art of war. In the beginning of the third book he describes the Trojans rushing on to the battle in a barbarous and confused manner, with loud shouts and cries, while the Greeks advance in the most profound silence and exact order. And in the latter part of the fourth book, where the two armies march to the



First Odius falls, and bites the bloody sand,  
His death ennobled by Atrides' hand ;  
As he to flight his wheeling car addrest,  
The speedy javelin drove from back to breast.  
In dust the mighty Halizonian lay, 55  
His arms resound, the spirit wings its way.

Thy fate was next, O Phæstus ! doom'd to feel  
The great Idomeneus' protended steel ;  
Whom Borus sent (his son and only joy)  
From fruitful Tarnè to the fields of Troy. 60  
The Cretan javelin reach'd him from afar,  
And pierced his shoulder as he mounts his car ;  
Back from the car he tumbles to the ground,  
And everlasting shades his eyes surround.

engagement, the Greeks are animated by Pallas, while Mars instigates the Trojans ; the poet attributing by this plain allegory to the former a well-conducted valour, to the latter rash strength and brutal force : so that the abilities of each nation are distinguished by the characters of the Deities who assist them. But in this place, as Eustathius observes, the poet being willing to show how much the Greeks excelled their enemies, when they engaged only with their proper force, and when each side was alike destitute of divine assistance, takes occasion to remove the Gods out of the battle, and then each Grecian chief gives signal instances of valour superior to the Trojans.

A modern critick observes, that this constant superiority of the Greeks in the art of war, valour, and number, is contradictory to the main design of the poem, which is to make the return of Achilles appear necessary for the preservation of the Greeks ; but this contradiction vanishes, when we reflect, that the affront given Achilles was the occasion of Jupiter's interposing in favour of the Trojans. Wherefore the anger of Achilles was not pernicious to the Greeks purely because it kept him inactive, but because it occasioned Jupiter to afflict them in such a manner, as made it necessary to appease Achilles, in order to render Jupiter propitious.

Then died Scamandrius, expert in the chace, 65  
In woods and wilds to wound the savage race ;  
Diana taught him all her sylvan arts,  
To bend the bow, and aim unerring darts :  
But vainly here Diana's arts he tries,  
The fatal lance arrests him as he flies ; 70  
From Menelaüs' arm the weapon sent,  
Through his broad back and heaving bosom went :  
Down sinks the warrior with a thundering sound,  
His brazen armour rings against the ground.

Next artful Phereclus untimely fell ; 75  
Bold Merion sent him to the realms of hell.  
Thy father's skill, O Phereclus, was thine,  
The graceful fabric and the fair design ;  
For loved by Pallas, Pallas did impart  
To him the shipwright's and the builder's art. 80  
Beneath his hand the fleet of Paris rose,  
The fatal cause of all his country's woes ;  
But he, the mystick will of Heaven unknown,  
Nor saw his country's peril, nor his own.  
The hapless artist, while confused he fled, 85  
The spear of Merion mingled with the dead.

Ver. 75. *Next artful Phereclus.*] This character of Phereclus is finely imagined, and presents a noble moral in an uncommon manner. There ran a report, that the Trojans had formerly received an oracle, commanding them to follow husbandry, and not apply themselves to navigation. Homer from hence takes occasion to feign, that the shipwright who presumed to build the fleet of Paris when he took his fatal voyage to Greece, was overtaken by the divine vengeance so long after as in this battle. One may take notice too in this, as in many other places, of the remarkable disposition Homer shews to *mechanicks* ; he never omits an opportunity either of describing a piece of workmanship, or of celebrating an artist. P.



Through his right hip with forceful fury cast,  
 Between the bladder and the bone it past :  
 Prone on his knees he falls with fruitless cries,  
 And death in lasting slumber seals his eyes. 90

From Meges' force the swift Pedæus fled,  
 Antenor's offspring from a foreign bed;  
 Whose generous spouse, Theano, heavenly fair,  
 Nursed the young stranger with a mother's care.

Ver. 93. *Whose generous spouse, Theano.*] Homer in this remarkable passage commends the fair Theano for breeding up a bastard of her husband's with the same tenderness as her own children. This lady was a woman of the first quality, and (as it appears in the sixth Iliad) the high priestess of Minerva: so that one cannot imagine the education of this child was imposed upon her by the authority or power of Antenor; Homer himself takes care to remove any such derogatory notion, by particularising the motive of this unusual piece of humanity to have been to please her husband, χαριζομένη πόσει ὦ. Nor ought we to lessen this commendation by thinking the wives of those times in general were more complaisant than those of our own. The stories of Phœnix, Clytemnestra, Medea, and many others, are plain instances how highly the keeping of mistresses was resented by the married ladies. But there was a difference between the Greeks and Asiatics as to their notions of marriage: for it is certain the latter allowed plurality of wives; Priam had many lawful ones, and some of them princesses who brought great dowries. Theano was an Asiatic, and that is the most we can grant; for the son she nursed so carefully was apparently not by a wife, but by a mistress; and her passions were naturally the same with those of the Grecian women. As to the degree of regard then shewn to the bastards, they were carefully enough educated, though not (like this of Antenor) as the lawful issue nor admitted to an equal share of inheritance. Megapenthes and Nicostratus were excluded from the inheritance of Sparta, because they were born of bond-women as Pausanias says. But Neoptolemus, a natural son of Achilles by Deïdamia, succeeded in his father's kingdom, perhaps with respect to his mother's quality, who was a princess. Upon the whole, however that matter stood, Homer was very favourable to bastards, and has paid them more compliments than one in his works. If I am not mistaken, Ulysses

How vain those cares ! when Meges in the rear 95  
 Full in his nape infix'd the fatal spear ;  
 Swift through his crackling jaws the weapon glides,  
 And the cold tongue and grinning teeth divides.

Then died Hypsenor, generous and divine,  
 Sprung from the brave Dolopion's mighty line, 100  
 Who near adored Scamander made abode,  
 Priest of the stream, and honour'd as a God.  
 On him, amidst the flying numbers found,  
 Eurypylus inflicts a deadly wound ;

reckons himself one in the *Odysseis*. Agamemnon in the eighth *Iliad* plainly accounts it no disgrace, when charmed with the noble exploits of young Teucer, and praising him in the rapture of his heart, he just then takes occasion to mention his illegitimacy as a kind of panegyrick upon him. The reader may consult the passage ver. 284 of the original, and ver. 343 of the translation. From all this I should not be averse to believe, that Homer himself was a bastard, as Virgil was, of which I think this observation a better proof, than what is said for it in the common lives of him. P.

Ver. 97.] Literally thus :

Beneath his teeth the steel cut sheer his tongue :

He fell in dust, and the cold weapon bit. W.

Ver. 99. ——— *Hypsenor, generous and divine,  
 Sprung from the great Dolopion's mighty line,  
 Who near adored Scamander made abode ;  
 Priest of the stream, and honour'd as a God.]*

From the number of circumstances put together here, and in many other passages, of the parentage, place of abode, profession, and quality of the persons our author mentions ; I think it is plain he composed his poem from some records or traditions of the actions of the times preceding, and complied with the truth of history. Otherwise these particular descriptions of genealogies and other minute circumstances would have been an affectation extremely needless and unreasonable. This consideration will account for several things that seem old or tedious, not to add that one may naturally believe he took these occasions of paying a compliment to many great men and families of his patrons, both in Greece and Asia. P.



On his broad shoulders fell the forceful brand, 105 }  
 Thence glancing downward lopp'd his holy hand, }  
 Which stain'd with sacred blood the blushing sand. }  
 Down sunk the priest; the purple hand of Death  
 Closed his dim eye, and Fate suppress'd his breath.

Thus toil'd the chiefs, in different parts engaged;  
 In every quarter fierce Tydides raged, 111

Amid the Greek, amid the Trojan train,  
 Rapt through the ranks he thunders o'er the plain:  
 Now here, now there, he darts from place to place,  
 Pours on the rear, or lightens in their face. 115

Thus from high hills the torrents, swift and strong,  
 Deluge whole fields, and sweep the trees along;  
 Through ruin'd moles the rushing wave resounds,  
 O'erwhelms the bridge, and bursts the lofty bounds:  
 The yellow harvests of the ripened year, 120  
 And flatted vineyards, one sad waste appear!  
 While Jove descends in sluicy sheets of rain,  
 And all the labours of mankind are vain.

So raged Tydides, boundless in his ire,  
 Drove armies back, and made all Troy retire. 125  
 With grief the \* leader of the Lycian band  
 Saw the wide waste of his destructive hand:  
 His bended bow against the chief he drew;  
 Swift to the mark the thirsty arrow flew,

Ver. 111.] This elegant and animated description, contained in this and the *four* following verses, is dilated from a couplet of his author, of which the following is a literal version:

With whom Tydides mixt, thou hadst not known,

If to the Trojans he belong'd, or Greeks.

W.

\* Pandarus.

Whose forky point the hollow breast-plate tore, 130  
Deep in his shoulder pierced, and drank the gore :  
The rushing stream his brazen armour dyed,  
While the proud archer thus exulting cried.

Hither ye Trojans, hither drive your steeds !  
Lo ! by our hand the bravest Grecian bleeds. 135  
Not long the deathful dart he can sustain ;  
Or Phœbus urged me to these fields in vain.

So spoke he, boastful ; but the winged dart  
Stopt short of life, and mock'd the shooter's art.  
The wounded chief, behind his car retir'd, 140  
The helping hand of Sthenelus requir'd ;  
Swift from his seat he leap'd upon the ground,  
And tugg'd the weapon from the gushing wound ;  
When thus the King his guardian power addrest,  
The purple current wandering o'er his vest. 145

O progeny of Jove ! unconquer'd maid !  
If e'er my godlike sire deserved thy aid,  
If e'er I felt thee in the fighting field,  
Now, Goddess, now, thy sacred succour yield.  
Oh give my lance to reach the Trojan knight, 150  
Whose arrow wounds the chief thou guard'st in fight ;  
And lay the boaster groveling on the shore,  
That vaunts these eyes shall view the light no more.

Thus pray'd Tydides, and Minerva heard ;  
His nerves confirm'd, his languid spirits chear'd ; 155  
He feels each limb with wonted vigour light ;  
His beating bosom claim'd the promised fight.

Ver. 157.] This line is stiff and aukward, nor correspondent to his original. Thus ?



Be bold (she cried) in every combat shine,  
 War be thy province, thy protection mine ;  
 Rush to the fight, and every foe control ; 160  
 Wake each paternal virtue in thy soul :  
 Strength swells thy boiling breast, infused by me,  
 And all thy godlike father breathes in thee !  
 Yet more, from mortal mists I purge thy eyes,  
 And set to view the warring Deities. 165  
 These see thou shun, through all the' embattled plain,  
 Nor rashly strive where human force is vain.  
 If Venus mingle in the martial band,  
 Her shalt thou wound : so Pallas gives command.  
 With that the blue-eyed virgin wing'd her flight ;  
 The hero rush'd impetuous to the fight ; 171  
 With tenfold ardour now invades the plain,  
 Wild with delay, and more enraged by pain.  
 As on the fleecy flocks, when hunger calls,  
 Amidst the field a brindled lion falls ; 175

*She makes each limb with wonted vigour light ;  
 And thus exhorts him to renew the fight :*

Be bold, Tydides ! in *each* combat shine. W.

Ver. 164. *From mortal mists I purge thy eyes.*] This fiction of Homer (says M. Dacier) is founded upon an important truth of religion, not unknown to the Pagans, that God only can open the eyes of men, and enable them to see what they cannot discover by their own capacity. There are frequent examples of this in the Old Testament. God opens the eyes of Hagar that she might see the fountain, in Genes. xxi. ver. 19. So Numbers xxii. ver. 31. *The Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in his way, and his sword drawn in his hand.* A passage much resembling this of our author. Venus in Virgil's second Æneid performs the same office to Æneas, and shews him the Gods who were engaged in the destruction of Troy. P.

If chance some shepherd with a distant dart  
The savage wound, he rouses at the smart,  
He foams, he roars ; the shepherd dares not stay,  
But trembling leaves the scattering flocks a prey ;  
Heaps fall on heaps ; he bathes with blood the ground,  
Then leaps victorious o'er the lofty mound. 181

Not with less fury stern Tydides flew ;  
And two brave leaders at an instant slew :  
Astynous breathless fell, and by his side  
His people's pastor, good Hypenor died ; 185  
Astynous' breast the deadly lance receives,  
Hypenor's shoulder his broad falchion cleaves.  
Those slain he left ; and sprung with noble rage  
Abas and Polyidus to engage ;

Sons of Eurydamas, who, wise and old, 190  
Could fates foresee, and mystick dreams unfold ;  
The youths return'd not from the doubtful plain,  
And the sad father tried his arts in vain ;  
No mystick dream could make their fates appear,  
Though now determined by Tydides' spear. 195

Young Xanthus next, and Thoön felt his rage ;  
The joy and hope of Phænops' feeble age ;  
Vast was his wealth, and these the only heirs  
Of all his labours, and a life of cares.  
Cold death o'ertakes them in their blooming years,  
And leaves the father unavailing tears : 201

Ver. 192.] The following couplet contains what appears to me the sense of Homer :

No dreams to them, departing for the war,  
Their sire explain'd: Tydides slew them there. W.



To strangers now descends his heapy store,  
The race forgotten, and the name no more.

Two sons of Priam in one chariot ride,  
Glittering in arms, and combat side by side. 205  
As when the lordly lion seeks his food  
Where grazing heifers range the lonely wood,  
He leaps amidst them with a furious bound,  
Bends their strong necks, and tears them to the  
ground :

So from their seats the brother-chiefs are torn, 210  
Their steeds and chariot to the navy borne.

With deep concern divine Æneas view'd  
The foe prevailing, and his friends pursued ;

Ver. 204.] It were easy to preserve the names of his author:

Chromius, Echemon, sons of Priam, ride

In *the same car*, and combat side by side. W.

Ver. 211.] More accurately:

Their steeds and *armour* to the navy borne. W.

Ver. 212. *Divine Æneas.*] It is here Æneas begins to act: and if we take a view of the whole episode of this hero in Homer, where he makes but an under part, it will appear that Virgil has kept him perfectly in the same character in his poem, where he shines as the first hero. His piety and his valour, though not drawn at so full a length, are marked no less in the original than in the copy. It is the manner of Homer to express very strongly the character of each of his persons in the first speech he is made to utter in the poem. In this of Æneas, there is a great air of *piety* in those strokes, *Is he some God who punishes Troy for having neglected his sacrifices?* And then that sentence, *The anger of heaven is terrible.* When he is in danger afterwards, he is saved by the heavenly assistance of two Deities at once, and his wounds cured in the holy temple of Pergamus by Latona and Diana. As to his valour, he is second only to Hector, and in personal bravery as great in the Greek author as in the Roman. He is made to exert himself on emergences of the first importance and hazard, rather than on common occasions: he checks Diomed here in the midst of his fury; in the thirteenth book defends his friend Deiphobus before it was

Through the thick storm of singing spears he flies,  
 Exploring Pandarus with careful eyes. 215  
 At length he found Lycaon's mighty son ;  
 To whom the chief of Venus' race begun,  
     Where, Pandarus, are all thy honours now,  
 Thy winged arrows and unerring bow,  
 Thy matchless skill, thy yet-unrivall'd fame, 220  
 And boasted glory of the Lycian name ?  
 Oh pierce that mortal ! if we mortal call  
 That wonderous force by which whole armies fall ;  
 Or God incensed, who quits the distant skies  
 To punish Troy for slighted sacrifice ; 225

his turn to fight, being placed in one of the hindmost ranks (which Homer, to take off all objections to his valour, tells us happened because Priam had an animosity to him, though he was one of the bravest of the army). He is one of those who rescue Hector when he is overthrown by Ajax in the fourteenth book. And what alone were sufficient to establish him a first-rate hero, he is the first that dares resist Achilles himself at his return to the fight in all his rage for the loss of Patroclus. He indeed avoids encountering two at once in the present book ; and shows upon the whole a sedate and deliberate courage, which if not so glaring as that of some others, is yet more just. It is worth considering how thoroughly Virgil penetrated into all this, and saw into the very idea of Homer ; so as to extend and call forth the whole figure in its full dimensions and colours, from the slightest hints and sketches which were but casually touched by Homer, and even in some points too, where they were rather left to be understood, than expressed. And this, by the way, ought to be considered by those criticks who object to Virgil's hero the want of that sort of courage which strikes us so much in Homer's Achilles. Æneas was not the creature of Virgil's imagination, but one whom the world was already acquainted with, and expected to see continued in the same character ; and one who perhaps was chosen for the hero of the Latin poem, not only as he was the founder of the Roman empire, but as this more calm and regular character better agreed with the temper and genius of the poet himself. P.



(Which oh avert from our unhappy state !  
 For what so dreadful as celestial hate ?)  
 Whoe'er he be, propitiate Jove with prayer ;  
 If man, destroy ; if God, intreat to spare.

To him the Lycian. Whom your eyes behold, 230  
 If right I judge, is Diomed the bold :

Such coursers whirl him o'er the dusty field,  
 So towers his helmet, and so flames his shield.  
 If 'tis a God, he wears that chief's disguise ;  
 Or if that chief, some guardian of the skies 235  
 Involved in clouds, protects him in the fray,  
 And turns unseen the frustrate dart away.

I wing'd an arrow, which not idly fell,  
 The stroke had fix'd him to the gates of hell ;  
 And, but some God, some angry God withstands,  
 His fate was due to these unerring hands. 241

Skill'd in the bow, on foot I sought the war,  
 Nor join'd swift horses to the rapid car.  
 Ten polish'd chariots I possess'd at home,  
 And still they grace Lycaon's princely dome : 245

Ver. 229.] This is a beautiful addition: but they, who think it unable to atone for the preceding insipid couplet, may substitute these *two* verses for the *four*:

Fierce is the wrath of Gods! but thou with prayer

Great Jove propitiate, and entreat to spare. W.

Ver. 224. *Ten polish'd chariots.*] Among the many pictures Homer gives us of the simplicity of the heroick age, he mingles from time to time some hints of an extraordinary magnificence. We have here a prince who has all these chariots for pleasure at one time, with their particular sets of horses to each, and the most sumptuous coverings in their stables. But we must remember that he speaks of an Asiatic prince, those barbarians living in great luxury. Dacier. P.

Ver. 245.] Some circumstances are here suppressed, illustrative

There veil'd in spacious coverlets they stand ;  
 And twice ten coursers wait their lord's command.  
 The good old warrior bade me trust to these,  
 When first for Troy I sail'd the sacred seas ;  
 In fields, aloft, the whirling car to guide, 250  
 And through the ranks of death triumphant ride.  
 But vain with youth, and yet to thrift inclin'd,  
 I heard his counsels with unheedful mind ;  
 And thought the steeds (your large supplies unknown)  
 Might fail of forage in the straiten'd town : 255  
 So took my bow and pointed darts in hand,  
 And left the chariots in my native land.

Too late, O friend ! my rashness I deplore ;  
 These shafts once fatal, carry death no more.  
 Tydeus' and Atreus' sons their points have found,  
 And undissembled gore pursued the wound. 261  
 In vain they bled : this unavailing bow  
 Serves, not to slaughter, but provoke the foe.

of the general spirit of this passage, which is not sufficiently apparent in our poet's translation. Chapman, though quaint and homely, will serve to represent the force of their original :

— for farre hence, where I dwell ;

My horse and chariots idle stand —

That eate white barly and blacke otes, and do no good at all. W.

Ver. 251.] Exactly thus :

He bade me, mounted on my steeds and car,

Conduct the Trojans through the straits of war. W.

Ver. 261. *And undissembled gore pursued the wound.*] The Greek is ἀτρεὺς αἷμα. He says he is sure it was real blood that followed his arrow ; because it was anciently a custom, particularly among the Spartans, to have ornaments and figures of a purple colour on their breast-plates, that the blood they lost might not be seen by the soldiers, and tend to their discouragement. Plutarch in his Instit. Lacon. takes notice of this point of antiquity, and I wonder it escaped Madam Dacier in her translation. P.



In evil hour these bended horns I strung,  
 And seized the quiver where it idly hung. 265  
 Cursed be the fate that sent me to the field,  
 Without a warrior's arms, the spear and shield !  
 If e'er with life I quit the Trojan plain,  
 If e'er I see my spouse and sire again,  
 This bow, unfaithful to my glorious aims, 270  
 Broke by my hand, shall feed the blazing flames,  
 To whom the leader of the Dardan race :  
 Be calm, nor Phœbus' honour'd gift disgrace ;  
 The distant dart be praised, though here we need  
 The rushing chariot, and the bounding steed. 275  
 Against yon' hero let us bend our course,  
 And, hand to hand, encounter force with force.  
 Now mount my seat, and from my chariot's height  
 Observe my father's steeds, renown'd in fight ;  
 Practised alike to turn, to stop, to chace, 280  
 To dare the shock, or urge the rapid race :

Ver. 266.] Our translator runs over the remainder of this speech very negligently. The following attempt is not unfaithful :

In evil hour, this bow was taken down  
 Erst from its peg, when I to lovely Troy,  
 A chief, with friendly aid to Hector came.  
 Should I return, should ere these eyes behold  
 My wife, my country, and my stately dome ;  
 May then some hostile sword a headless trunk  
 My body leave, if I withhold from flames  
 The fragments of this weapon, useless grown. W.

Ver. 272.] These *four* lines are expanded from the following quantity of his original :

Him answer'd thus Æneas, Trojan chief:  
 Talk not thou so. W.

Ver. 273. *Nor Phœbus' honour'd gift disgrace.*] For Homer tells us in the second book, ver. 334 of the catalogue, that the bow and shafts of Pandarus were given him by Apollo. P.

Secure with these, through fighting fields we go;  
 Or safe to Troy, if Jove assist the foe.  
 Haste, seize the whip, and snatch the guiding rein:  
 The warrior's fury let this arm sustain : 285  
 Or, if to combat thy bold heart incline,  
 Take thou the spear, the chariot's care be mine.

O Prince! (Lycaon's valiant son replied)  
 As thine the steeds, be thine the task to guide.  
 The horses practised to their lord's command, 290  
 Shall hear the rein, and answer to thy hand.  
 But if unhappy, we desert the fight,  
 Thy voice alone can animate their flight:  
 Else shall our fates be number'd with the dead,  
 And these, the victor's prize, in triumph led. 295  
 Thine be the guidance then: with spear and shield  
 Myself will charge this terror of the field.

And now both heroes mount the glittering car;  
 The bounding coursers rush amidst the war.  
 Their fierce approach bold Sthenelus espied, 300  
 Who thus, alarm'd, to great Tydides cried.

O friend! two chiefs of force immense I see,  
 Dreadful they come, and bend their rage on thee:

Ver. 280.] Homer says only:

—when to follow, when to fly.

W.

Ver. 284. *Haste, seize the whip, &c.*] Homer means not here, that one of the heroes should alight or descend from the chariot, but only that he should quit the reins to the management of the other, and stand on foot upon the chariot to fight from thence. As one might use the expression, *to descend from the ship*, to signify to quit the helm or oar, in order to take up arms. This is the note of Eustathius, by which it appears that most of the translators are mistaken in the sense of this passage, and among the rest Mr. Hobbes. P.



Lo the brave heir of old Lycaon's line,  
And great Æneas, sprung from race divine ! 305  
Enough is given to fame. Ascend thy car ;  
And save a life, the bulwark of our war.

At this the hero cast a gloomy look,  
Fix'd on the chief with scorn, and thus he spoke.

Me dost thou bid to shun the coming fight ? 310  
Me wouldst thou move to base, inglorious flight ?  
Know, 'tis not honest in my soul to fear,  
Nor was Tydides born to tremble here.

I hate the cumbrous chariot's slow advance,  
And the long distance of the flying lance ; 315  
But while my nerves are strong, my force entire,  
Thus front the foe, and emulate my sire.

Nor shall yon' steeds, that fierce to fight convey  
Those threatening heroes, bear them both away ;  
One chief at least beneath this arm shall die ; 320  
So Pallas tells me, and forbids to fly.

But if she dooms, and if no God withstand,  
That both shall fall by one victorious hand,  
Then heed my words : my horses here detain,  
Fix'd to the chariot by the straiten'd rein ; 325

Swift to Æneas' empty seat proceed,  
And seize the coursers of ethereal breed :  
The race of those, which once the thundering God  
For ravish'd Ganymede on Tros bestow'd ;

Ver. 306.] The original may be exhibited more faithfully as follows :

Turn we our steeds ; nor foremost thus expose  
Thy precious life amidst this throng of foes.

W.

The best that e'er on earth's broad surface run, 330  
Beneath the rising or the setting sun.

Hence great Anchises stole a breed, unknown

By mortal mares, from fierce Laomedon :

Four of this race his ample stalls contain,

And two transport Æneas o'er the plain. 335

These, were the rich immortal prize our own,

Thro' the wide world should make our glory known.

Thus while they spoke, the foe came furious on,  
And stern Lycaon's warlike race begun.

Prince, thou art met. Tho' late in vain assail'd,  
The spear may enter where the arrow fail'd. 341

He said, then shook the ponderous lance, and  
flung;

On his broad shield the sounding weapon rung,

Pierced the tough orb, and in his cuirass hung.

He bleeds ! the pride of Greece ! (the boaster cries)

Our triumph now, the mighty warrior lies ! 346

Mistaken vaunter ! Diomed replied ;

Thy dart has err'd, and now my spear be tried :

Ye 'scape not both ; one, headlong from his car,

With hostile blood shall glut the God of war. 350

He spoke, and rising hurl'd his forceful dart,

Which driven by Pallas, pierced a vital part ;

Full in his face it enter'd, and betwixt

The nose and eye-ball the proud Lycian fixt ;

Ver. 342.] None of the translators represent the elegance of the Greek word *ἀμπεπάλων* : *moving again and again*, with a view to *poise* and *direct*. Our poet follows Chapman :

This said, *he shooke*, and then he threw, a lance. W.

Ver. 353. *Full in his face it enter'd.*] It has been asked, how



Crash'd all his jaws, and cleft the tongue within, 355  
 'Till the bright point look'd out beneath the chin.  
 Headlong he falls, his helmet knocks the ground ;  
 Earth groans beneath him, and his arms resound ;  
 The starting coursers tremble with affright ;  
 The soul indignant seeks the realms of night. 360  
 To guard his slaughter'd friend, Æneas flies,  
 His spear extending where the carcase lies ;

Diomed being on foot, could naturally be supposed to give such a wound as is described here. Were it never so improbable, the express mention that Minerva conducted the javelin to that part, would render this passage unexceptionable. But without having recourse to a miracle, such a wound might be received by Pandarus, either if he stooped, or if his enemy took the advantage of a rising ground, by which means he might not impossibly stand higher, though the other were in a chariot. This is the solution given by the ancient Scholia, which is confirmed by the lowness of the chariots, observed in the Essay on Homer's battles. P.

Besides, the *parabola* described by the weapon, of a curvature regulated by the distance, the weight of the spear, and the strength of it's discharge, might co-operate to this direction of the wound. W.

Ver. 359.] This verse is empty and tautologous ; and the vigour of the passage is enervated by such expansion. I should have preferred something like the following, to which his excursive fancy would have found rhyme with ease :

Headlong he fell : clang'd his bright arms beneath :

The coursers startled ; and the chief expired. W.

Ver. 360.] His original says,

His life was loosed, and his strength relax'd. W.

Ver. 361. *To guard his slaughter'd friend, Æneas flies.*] This protecting of the dead body was not only an office of piety agreeable to the character of Æneas in particular, but looked upon as a matter of great importance in those times. It was believed that the very soul of the deceased suffered by the body's remaining destitute of the rites of sepulture, as not being else admitted to pass the waters of Styx. See what Patroclus's ghost says to Achilles in the twenty-third Iliad. See also Virgil. *Æn.* vii. Whoever considers this, will not be surpris'd at those long and obstinate

Watchful he wheels, protects it every way,  
 As the grim lion stalks around his prey.  
 O'er the fallen trunk his ample shield displayed, 365  
 He hides the hero with his mighty shade,  
 And threats aloud: the Greeks with longing eyes  
 Behold at distance, but forbear the prize.  
 Then fierce Tydides stoops: and from the fields 369  
 Heaved with vast force, a rocky fragment wields.  
 Not two strong men the' enormous weight could raise,  
 Such men as live in these degenerate days.  
 He swung it round; and gathering strength to throw,  
 Discharged the ponderous ruin at the foe.  
 Where to the hip, the' inserted thigh unites, 375  
 Full on the bone the pointed marble lights;  
 Through both the tendons broke the rugged stone,  
 And stripp'd the skin, and crack'd the solid bone.  
 Sunk on his knees, and staggering with his pains,  
 His falling bulk his bended arm sustains; 380

combats for the bodies of the heroes, so frequent in the Iliad. Homer thought it of such weight, that he has put this circumstance of want of burial into the *proposition* at the beginning of his poem, as one of the chief misfortunes that befel the Greeks. P.

Ver. 371. *Not two strong men.*] This opinion of a degeneracy of human size and strength in the process of ages, has been very general. The active life and temperance of the first men, before their native powers were prejudiced by luxury, may be supposed to have given them this advantage. Celsus in his first book observes, that Homer mentions no sort of diseases in the old heroick times but what were immediately inflicted by heaven, as if their temperance and exercise preserved them from all besides. Virgil imitates this passage, with a farther allowance of the decay, in proportion to the distance of his time from that of Homer. For he says it was an attempt that exceeded the strength of *twelve* men instead of *two*. P.



Lost in a dizzy mist the warrior lies ;  
 A sudden cloud comes swimming o'er his eyes.  
 There the brave chief who mighty numbers sway'd,  
 Oppress'd had sunk to death's eternal shade ;  
 But heavenly Venus, mindful of the love 385  
 She bore Anchises in the' Idæan grove,  
 His danger views with anguish and despair,  
 And guards her offspring with a mother's care.  
 About her much-loved son her arms she throws,  
 Her arms whose whiteness match the falling snows.  
 Screen'd from the foe behind her shining veil, 391  
 The swords wave harmless, and the javelins fail :  
 Safe through the rushing horse, and feather'd flight  
 Of sounding shafts, she bears him from the fight.

Nor Sthenelus, with unassisting hands, 395  
 Remain'd unheedful of his lord's commands :  
 His panting steeds, removed from out the war,  
 He fix'd with straiten'd traces to the car.  
 Next rushing to the Dardan spoil, detains  
 The heavenly coursers with the flowing manes : 400  
 These in proud triumph to the fleet convey'd,  
 No longer now a Trojan lord obey'd.  
 That charge to bold Deïpylus he gave,  
 (Whom most he loved, as brave men love the  
     brave)

Ver. 382.] This is so expressed as to become an insignificant redundancy. I would propose the following alterations of the passage, which approximate more nearly to the original :

Sunk on his knees, and staggering *to the plain*,  
 See the fallen trunk his *sturdy* arm sustain !  
 Lost in a mist, which o'er his swimming eyes  
 Night's sable hand *diffus'd*, the warrior lies.

W.

Then mounting on his car, resumed the rein, 405  
And follow'd where Tydides swept the plain.

Meanwhile (his conquest ravish'd from his eyes)  
The raging chief in chace of Venus flies :  
No Goddess she commission'd to the field,  
Like Pallas dreadful with her sable shield, 410  
Or fierce Bellona thundering at the wall,  
While flames ascend, and mighty ruins fall.  
He knew soft combats suit the tender dame,  
New to the field, and still a foe to fame.  
Through breaking ranks his furious course he bends,  
And at the Goddess his broad lance extends ; 416  
Through her bright veil the daring weapon drove ;  
The' ambrosial veil, which all the Graces wove ;  
Her snowy hand the razing steel profaned,  
And the transparent skin with crimson stain'd. 420  
From the clear vein a stream immortal flow'd,  
Such stream as issues from a wounded God :

Ver. 408. *The chief in chace of Venus flies.*] We have seen with what ease Venus takes Paris out of the battle in the third book, when his life was in danger from Menelaüs ; but here when she has a charge of more importance and nearer concern, she is not able to preserve herself or her son from the fury of Diomed. The difference of success in two attempts so like each other, is occasioned by that penetration of sight with which Pallas had endued her favourite. For the Gods in their intercourse with men are not ordinarily seen, but when they please to render themselves visible ; wherefore Venus might think herself and her son secure from the insolence of this daring mortal ; but was in this deceived, being ignorant of that faculty, wherewith the hero was enabled to distinguish Gods as well as men. P.

Ver. 413.] This distich is superfluous, and might well be spared. The insipid expression of the *second* verse seems derived from Chapman :

— a Goddesse weake, and foe to men's renownes. W.



Pure emanation ! uncorrupted flood ;  
 Unlike our gross, diseased, terrestrial blood :

Ver. 422. *Such stream as issues from a wounded God.*] This is one of those passages in Homer, which have given occasion to that famous censure of Tully and Longinus, *That he makes Gods of his heroes, and mortals of his Gods.* This, taken in a general sense, appeared the highest impiety to Plato and Pythagoras ; one of whom has banished Homer from his commonwealth, and the other said he was tortured in hell, for fictions of this nature. But if a due distinction be made of a difference among beings superior to mankind, which both the Pagans and Christians have allowed, the fables may be easily accounted for. *Wounds inflicted on the dragon, bruising the serpent's head,* and other such metaphorical images, are consecrated in holy writ, and applied to angelical and incorporeal natures. But in our author's days they had a notion of Gods that were *corporeal*, to whom they ascribed bodies, though of a more subtile kind than those of mortals. So in this very place he supposes them to have blood, but blood of a finer superior nature. Notwithstanding the foregoing censures, Milton has not scrupled to imitate and apply this to angels in the Christian system, when Satan is wounded by Michael in his sixth book, ver. 327. Aristotle, cap. xxvi. Art. Poet. excuses Homer for following fame and common opinion in his account of the Gods, though no way agreeable to truth. The religion of those times taught no other notions of the Deity, than that the Gods were beings of human forms and passions, so that any but a real Anthropomorphite would probably have past among the ancient Greeks for an impious heretick : they thought their religion, which worshipped the Gods in images of human shape, was much more refined and rational than that of Ægypt and other nations, who adored them in animal or monstrous forms. And certainly Gods of human shape cannot justly be esteemed or described otherwise, than as a celestial race, superior only to mortal men by greater abilities, and a more extensive degree of wisdom and strength, subject however to the necessary inconveniences consequent to corporeal beings. Cicero, in his book de Nat. Deor. urges this consequence strongly against the Epicureans, who though they deposed the Gods from any power in creating or governing the world, yet maintained their existence in human forms.

This particular of the wounding of Venus seems to be a fiction of Homer's own brain, naturally deducible from the doctrine of corporeal Gods abovementioned ; and considered as poetry, no way

(For not the bread of man their life sustains, 425  
 Nor wine's inflaming juice supplies their veins.)  
 With tender shrieks the Goddess fill'd the place,  
 And dropt her offspring from her weak embrace,  
 Him Phœbus took : he casts a cloud around 429  
 The fainting chief, and wards the mortal wound.

Then with a voice that shook the vaulted skies,  
 The king insults the Goddess as she flies.  
 Ill with Jove's daughter bloody fights agree,  
 The field of combat is no scene for thee :  
 Go, let thy own soft sex employ thy care, 435  
 Go lull the coward, or delude the fair.

shocking. Yet our author, as if he had foreseen some objection, has very artfully inserted a justification of this bold stroke, in the speech Dione soon after makes to Venus. For as it was natural to comfort her daughter, by putting her in mind that many other Deities had received as ill treatment from mortals by the permission of Jupiter ; so it was of great use to the poet, to enumerate those ancient fables to the same purpose, which being then generally assented to, might obtain credit for his own. This fine remark belongs to Eustathius. P.

Ver. 423.] This couplet is superadded to his original, in imitation of Dacier: "*Qui n' est proprement que comme une rosée, ou une vapeur divine ; car les Dieux—n' ont pas un sang terrestre et grossier comme le nôtre.*" W.

Ver. 424. *Unlike our gross, diseased, terrestrial blood, &c.*] The opinion of the incorruptibility of celestial matter seems to have been received in the time of Homer. For he makes the immortality of the Gods to depend upon the incorruptible nature of the nutriment by which they are sustained ; as the mortality of men to proceed from the corruptible materials of which they are made, and by which they are nourished. We have several instances in him from whence this may be inferred, as when Diomed questions Glaucus, if he be a God or mortal, he adds, *One who is sustained by the fruits of the earth.* Lib. vi. ver 175.

Ver. 431.] What says his author? merely,

At her the warlike chieftain loudly cried.



Taught by this stroke, renounce the war's alarms,  
And learn to tremble at the name of arms.

Tydidēs thus. The Goddess, seiz'd with dread,  
Confused, distracted, from the conflict fled. 440

To aid her, swift the winged Iris flew,  
Wrapt in a mist above the warring crew.

The queen of Love with faded charms she found,  
Pale was her cheek, and livid look'd the wound.

To Mars, who sat remote, they bent their way, 445  
Far on the left, with clouds involved he lay ;

Beside him stood his lance, distain'd with gore,  
And, rein'd with gold, his foaming steeds before :

Low at his knee she begg'd, with streaming eyes,  
Her brother's car, to mount the distant skies, 450

And show'd the wound by fierce Tydides given,  
A mortal man, who dares encounter Heaven.

Ver. 440.] It had been better, and more accurate,  
*With pain* distracted—

W.

Ver. 442.] This extraneous notion of the *mist* he found in  
Chapman.

W.

Ver. 449. *Low at his knee she begg'd.*] All the former English  
translators make it, *she fell on her knees*, an oversight occasioned  
by the want of a competent knowledge in antiquities (without  
which no man can tolerably understand this author). For the  
custom of praying on the knees was unknown to the Greeks, and  
in use only among the Hebrews.

P.

I find no traces of these *streaming eyes* either in the original, or  
elsewhere, save in the old French translator Barbin.

W.

Ver. 451.] Our poet, with uncommon carelessness, has omit-  
ted a speech of *four* verses in the original, and attempted to supply  
their meaning by this couplet: in which he has exactly followed  
Chapman. The reader must excuse Chapman, slightly corrected,  
to show the sense ;

*Hence bear me, brother ! and thy chariot lend,  
That soon I may the' Olympian seats ascend.*

Stern Mars attentive hears the queen complain,  
 And to her hand commits the golden rein ;  
 She mounts the seat, oppress'd with silent woe, 455  
 Driven by the Goddess of the painted bow.  
 The lash resounds, the rapid chariot flies,  
 And in a moment scales the lofty skies :  
 There stopp'd the car, and there the coursers stood,  
 Fed by fair Iris with ambrosial food. 460  
 Before her mother, Love's bright queen appears,  
 O'erwhelm'd with anguish and dissolved in tears ;  
 She raised her in her arms, beheld her bleed,  
 And ask'd, what God had wrought this guilty deed ?  
 Then she ; This insult from no God I found, 465  
 An impious mortal gave the daring wound !  
 Behold the deed of haughty Diomed !  
 'Twas in the son's defence the mother bled.  
 The war with Troy no more the Grecians wage ;  
 But with the Gods (the' immortal Gods) engage. 470

A mortal hurt me, nor would he retire

From Jove himself, though arm'd with dreadful fire. W.

Ver. 462.] There is no shadow of this verse in his author ; see above the note at ver. 449. The couplet represents the following sense in Homer :

Before her mother's knees, Dione, fell

Immortal Venus. W.

Ver. 464.] In this verse he again slurs over a speech of his author, and thereby lessens the animation of the story. Ogilby's version is very homely, but accurately interprets its original.

Whom fair Dione pitying did stroke,

And, her embracing in her arms, thus spoke :

What boisterous God so rude hath been, that he

Thus like a malefactor punish'd thee ? W.

Ver. 465.] Homer had said merely,

Proud Diomed, son of Tydeus, gave the wound. W.



Dione then. Thy wrongs with patience bear,  
 And share those griefs inferior powers must share :  
 Unnumber'd woes mankind from us sustain,  
 And men with woes afflict the Gods again.  
 The mighty Mars in mortal fetters bound, 475  
 And lodged in brazen dungeons under ground,  
 Full thirteen moons imprison'd roar'd in vain ;  
 Otus and Ephialtes held the chain :  
 Perhaps had perish'd ; had not Hermes' care  
 Restored the groaning God to upper air. 480  
 Great Juno's self has borne her weight of pain,  
 The' imperial partner of the heavenly reign :  
 Amphitryon's son infix'd the deadly dart,  
 And fill'd with anguish her immortal heart.  
 Even hell's grim king Alcides' power confest, 485  
 The shaft found entrance in his iron breast ;  
 To Jove's high palace for a cure he fled,  
 Pierced in his own dominions of the dead ;

Ver. 479. *Perhaps had perish'd.*] Some of Homer's censurers have inferred from this passage, that the poet represents his Gods subject to death ; when nothing but great misery is here described. It is a common way of speech to use *perdition* and destruction for *misfortune* : the language of scripture calls eternal punishment *perishing everlastingly*. There is a remarkable passage to this purpose in Tacitus, An. vi. which very lively represents the miserable state of a distracted tyrant : it is the beginning of a letter from Tiberius to the senate : *Quid scribam vobis P. C. aut quomodo scribam, aut quid omnino non scribam hoc tempore, Dii me Deæque pejus perdant quàm perire quotidie sentio, si scio.* P.

He omits part of his author, which is thus neatly exhibited by Chapman :

—if his kind step-dame's eye,

Faire Ereboæ, had not seene ; who told it Mercurie. W.

Where Pæon, sprinkling heavenly balm around,  
 Assuaged the glowing pangs, and closed the wound.  
 Rash, impious man! to stain the blest abodes, 491  
 And drench his arrows in the blood of Gods!

But thou (though Pallas urged thy frantick deed)  
 Whose spear ill-fated makes a Goddess bleed,  
 Know thou, whoe'er with heavenly power contends,  
 Short is his date, and soon his glory ends; 496  
 From fields of death when late he shall retire,  
 No infant on his knees shall call him sire.  
 Strong as thou art some God may yet be found,  
 To stretch thee pale and gasping on the ground; 500  
 Thy distant wife, Ægiale the fair,  
 Starting from sleep with a distracted air,

Ver. 498. *No infant on his knees shall call him sire.*] This is Homer's manner of foretelling that he shall perish unfortunately in battle, which is infinitely a more artful way of conveying that thought than by a direct expression. He does not simply say, he shall never return from the war, but intimates as much by describing the loss of the most sensible and affecting pleasure that a warrior can receive at his return. Of the like nature is the prophecy at the end of this speech of the hero's death, by representing it in a dream of his wife's. There are many fine strokes of this kind in the prophetic parts of the Old Testament. Nothing is more natural than Dione's forming these images of revenge upon Diomed, the hope of which vengeance was so proper a topick of consolation to Venus. P.

Ver. 501. *Thy distant wife.*] The poet seems here to compliment the fair sex at the expence of truth, by concealing the character of Ægiale, whom he has described with the disposition of a faithful wife; though the history of those times represents her as an abandoned prostitute, who gave up her own person and her husband's crown to her lover. So that Diomed at his return from Troy, when he expected to be received with all the tenderness of a loving spouse, found his bed and throne possessed by an adulterer, was forced to fly his country, and seek refuge and subsistence in



Shall rouse thy slaves, and her lost lord deplore,  
The brave, the great, the glorious now no more!

This said, she wiped from Venus' wounded palm  
The sacred ichor, and infused the balm. 506  
Juno and Pallas with a smile survey'd,  
And thus to Jove began the blue-eyed maid.

Permit thy daughter, gracious Jove! to tell  
How this mischance the Cyprian queen befel. 510  
As late she tried with passion to inflame  
The tender bosom of a Grecian dame,  
Allured the fair with moving thoughts of joy,  
To quit her country for some youth of Troy;  
The clasping zone, with golden buckles bound, 515  
Razed her soft hand with this lamented wound.

The sire of Gods and men superior smil'd,  
And, calling Venus, thus addrest his child.  
Not these, O daughter, are thy proper cares,  
Thee milder arts befit, and softer wars; 520  
Sweet smiles are thine, and kind endearing charms,  
To Mars and Pallas leave the deeds of arms.

Thus they in heaven: while on the plain below  
The fierce Tydides charged his Dardan foe;

foreign lands. Thus the offended Goddess executed her vengeance by the proper effects of her own power, by involving the hero in a series of misfortunes proceeding from the incontinence of his wife. P.

Ver. 506.] Homer supposes the wound to be healed by the mere application of Dione's *hand*. The original runs literally thus:

Then with both hands the ichor purged away:  
The arm was heal'd, the grievous pains assuaged. W.

Ver. 521.] He might have adhered to his original:  
Thine *nuptial rites*, and kind endearing charms. W.

Flush'd with celestial blood pursued his way, 525  
 And fearless dared the threatening God of day;  
 Already in his hopes he saw him kill'd,  
 Though screen'd behind Apollo's mighty shield.  
 Thrice rushing furious, at the chief he strook;  
 His blazing buckler thrice Apollo shook: 530  
 He tried the fourth: when breaking from the  
 cloud,

A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

O son of Tydeus, cease! be wise and see  
 How vast the difference of the Gods and thee:  
 Distance immense! between the powers that shine  
 Above, eternal, deathless, and divine, 536  
 And mortal man! a wretch of humble birth,  
 A short-lived reptile in the dust of earth.

So spoke the God who darts celestial fires;  
 He dreads his fury, and some steps retires. 540  
 Then Phœbus bore the chief of Venus' race  
 To Troy's high fane, and to his holy place;  
 Latona there and Phœbe heal'd the wound,  
 With vigour arm'd him, and with glory crown'd.  
 This done, the patron of the silver bow 545  
 A phantom raised, the same in shape and show

Ver. 531.] This is nonsense. Substitute:

*At his fourth onset, breaking from the cloud—.*

The following is an exact translation of the original:

When, like some God, a fourth assault he made,  
 Far-darting Phœbus loudly-threatening said.

W.

Ver. 532.] The original is this, as literally as I can give it:

Reflect, Tydides! and retire; nor swell  
 Thy soul with godlike thoughts. Unlike the tribe  
 Of Gods immortal, and earth-creeping men.

W.



With great Æneas ; such the form he bore,  
And such in fight the radiant arms he wore.  
Around the spectre bloody wars are wag'd,  
And Greece and Troy with clashing shields engag'd.  
Meantime on Ilion's tower Apollo stood,                   551  
And calling Mars, thus urged the raging God.

Stern power of arms, by whom the mighty fall ;  
Who bath'st in blood, and shak'st the' embattled  
wall,

Rise in thy wrath ; to hell's abhorr'd abodes                   555  
Dispatch yon Greek, and vindicate the Gods.  
First rosy Venus felt his brutal rage ;  
Me next he charged, and dares all heaven engage ;  
The wretch would brave high heaven's immortal sire,  
His triple thunder, and his bolts of fire.                   560

The God of battle issues on the plain,  
Stirs all the ranks, and fires the Trojan train ;  
In form like Acamas, the Thracian guide,  
Enraged, to Troy's retiring chiefs he cried :

How long, ye sons of Priam ! will ye fly,                   565  
And unrevenged see Priam's people die ?  
Still unresisted shall the foe destroy,  
And stretch the slaughter to the gates of Troy ?  
Lo brave Æneas sinks beneath his wound,  
Not godlike Hector more in arms renown'd :                   570

Ver. 553.] This attempt is a literal version of the speech :  
Mars, murderous Mars ! wall-shaker ! stain'd with blood !  
Wilt thou not go, and drag this man from war ?  
Tydides, who would fight with Jove himself.  
First Venus' wrist he, close-encountering, smote ;  
Then rusht on me, impetuous as a God.                   W.

Haste all, and take the generous warrior's part.

He said ; new courage swell'd each hero's heart

Sarpedon first his ardent soul express'd,

And, turn'd to Hector, these bold words address'd.

Say, chief, is all thy ancient valour lost ? 575

Where are thy threats, and where thy glorious boast,

That propt alone by Priam's race should stand

Troy's sacred walls, nor need a foreign hand ?

Now, now thy country calls her wanted friends,

And the proud vaunt in just derision ends. 580

Remote they stand, while alien troops engage,

Like trembling hounds before the lion's rage.

Far distant hence I held my wide command,

Where foaming Xanthus laves the Lycian land,

With ample wealth (the wish of mortals) blest, 585

A beauteous wife, and infant at her breast ;

With those I left whatever dear could be ;

Greece, if she conquers, nothing wins from me.

Yet first in fight my Lycian bands I cheer,

And long to meet this mighty man ye fear ; 590

While Hector idle stands, nor bids the brave

Their wives, their infants, and their altars save.

Haste, warrior, haste ! preserve thy threaten'd state ;

Or one vast burst of all-involving Fate

Ver. 572.] Homer has literally,

He said, and roused the strength and soul of each. W.

Ver. 594.] Unfortunately, our translator, from the native enthusiasm of genius, and kindled by the fire of his great exemplar, was perpetually aiming at something more sonorous and magnificent than his original. Otherwise, his exquisite taste would not have permitted him, at a sedater season, to substitute a figure of his own for the beautiful comparison provided to his hands. With this view the passage might be thus adjusted :



Full o'er your towers shall fall and sweep away 595  
 Sons, sires, and wives, an undistinguish'd prey.  
 Rouse all thy Trojans, urge thy aids to fight;  
 These claim thy thoughts by day, thy watch by night;  
 With force incessant the brave Greeks oppose; 599  
 Such cares thy friends deserve, and such thy foes.

Stung to the heart the generous Hector hears,  
 But just reproof with decent silence bears.  
 From his proud car the prince impetuous springs,  
 On earth he leaps; his brazen armour rings. 604  
 Two shining spears are brandish'd in his hands;  
 Thus arm'd, he animates his drooping bands,  
 Revives their ardour, turns their steps from flight,  
 And wakes anew the dying flames of fight.  
 They turn, they stand, the Greeks their fury dare,  
 Condense their powers, and wait the growing war.

As when, on Ceres' sacred floor, the swain 611  
 Spreads the wide fan to clear the golden grain,  
 And the light chaff, before the breezes borne,  
 Ascends in clouds from off the heapy corn;

Haste, warrior! haste,—preserve thy threaten'd state;  
 Or one vast *net* of all-involving Fate  
 Full o'er your towers shall *spread*, and sweep away,  
 Sons, sires, and wives, an undistinguish'd prey.

And surely those, who can relish the native beauties of simplicity,  
 will require no meretricious decorations here. W.

Ver. 602.] This is not found in the original, which says literally,  
 Sarpedon spake: the word stang Hector's mind. W.

Ver. 611. *Ceres' sacred floor.*] Homer calls the threshing-floor  
*sacred* (says Eustathius) not only as it was consecrated to Ceres, but  
 in regard of its great use and advantage to human kind: in which  
 sense also he frequently gives the same epithet to *cities*, &c. This  
 simile is of an exquisite beauty. P.

The grey dust, rising with collected winds, 615  
Drives o'er the barn, and whitens all the hinds;  
So white with dust the Grecian host appears,  
From trampling steeds, and thundering charioteers;  
The dusky clouds from labour'd earth arise,  
And roll in smoking volumes to the skies. 620  
Mars hovers o'er them with his sable shield,  
And adds new horrors to the darken'd field:  
Pleased with his charge, and ardent to fulfil  
In Troy's defence, Apollo's heavenly will:  
Soon as from fight the blue-eyed maid retires, 625  
Each Trojan bosom with new warmth he fires.  
And now the God, from forth his sacred fane,  
Produced Æneas to the shouting train;  
Alive, unharm'd, with all his Peers around,  
Erect he stood, and vigorous from his wound: 630  
Enquiries none they made; the dreadful day  
No pause of words admits, no dull delay;  
Fierce Discord storms, Apollo loud exclaims,  
Fame calls, Mars thunders, and the field's in flames.  
Stern Diomed with either Ajax stood, 635  
And great Ulysses, bathed in hostile blood.  
Embodied close, the labouring Grecian train  
The fiercest shock of charging hosts sustain.  
Unmoved and silent, the whole war they wait,  
Serenely dreadful, and as fix'd as fate. 640  
So when the' embattled clouds in dark array,  
Along the skies their gloomy lines display;  
When now the North his boisterous rage has spent,  
And peaceful sleeps the liquid element;



The low-hung vapours, motionless and still, 645  
Rest on the summits of the shaded hill ;  
'Till the mass scatters as the winds arise,  
Dispersed and broken through the ruffled skies.

Nor was the general wanting to his train,  
From troop to troop he toils through all the plain. 650  
Ye Greeks, be men ! the charge of battle bear ;  
Your brave associates and yourselves revere !  
Let glorious acts more glorious acts inspire,  
And catch from breast to breast the noble fire !  
On valour's side the odds of combat lie, 655  
The brave live glorious, or lamented die ;  
The wretch who trembles in the field of fame,  
Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.

These words he seconds with his flying lance,  
To meet whose point was strong Deicoön's chance :  
Æneas' friend, and in his native place, 661  
Honour'd and loved like Priam's royal race :  
Long had he fought the foremost in the field,  
But now the monarch's lance transpierced his  
shield :

His shield too weak the furious dart to stay, 665  
Through his broad belt the weapon forced its way ;  
The grizly wound dismiss'd his soul to hell,  
His arms around him rattled as he fell.

Then fierce Æneas brandishing his blade,  
In dust Orsilochus and Crethon laid, 670  
Whose sire Diöcleus, wealthy, brave, and great,  
In well-built Pheræ held his lofty seat :

Sprung from Alpheus' plenteous stream ! that yields  
 Increase of harvests to the Pylia fields.  
 He got Orsilochus, Diöcleus he, 675  
 And these descended in the third degree.  
 Too early expert in the martial toil,  
 In sable ships they left their native soil,  
 To' avenge Atrides : now, untimely slain,  
 They fell with glory on the Phrygian plain. 680  
 So two young mountain lions, nursed with blood  
 In deep recesses of the gloomy wood,  
 Rush fearless to the plains, and uncontroll'd  
 Depopulate the stalls and waste the fold ;  
 'Till pierced at distance from their native den, 685  
 O'erpower'd they fall beneath the force of men.  
 Prostrate on earth their beauteous bodies lay,  
 Like mountain firs, as tall and straight as they.  
 Great Menelaüs views with pitying eyes,  
 Lifts his bright lance, and at the victor flies ; 690  
 Mars urged him on ; yet ruthless in his hate,  
 The God but urged him to provoke his fate.  
 He thus advancing, Nestor's valiant son  
 Shakes for his danger, and neglects his own ;  
 Struck with the thought, should Helen's lord be slain,  
 And all his country's glorious labours vain. 696  
 Already met, the threatening heroes stand :  
 The spears already tremble in their hand ;

Ver. 680.] Literally :

But them the close of death o'ersadow'd there.

W.

Ver. 696. *And all his country's glorious labours vain.*] For (as Agamemnon said in the fourth book upon Menelaüs's being wounded) if he were slain, the war would be at an end, and the Greeks think only of returning to their country. Spondanus. P.



In rush'd Antilochus, his aid to bring,  
And fall or conquer by the Spartan king. 700  
These seen, the Dardan backward turn'd his course.  
Brave as he was, and shunn'd unequal force.  
The breathless bodies to the Greeks they drew,  
Then mix in combat, and their toils renew.

First Pylæmenes, great in battle, bled, 705  
Who, sheath'd in brass, the Paphlagonians led.  
Atrides mark'd him where sublime he stood ;  
Fix'd in his throat, the javelin drank his blood.  
The faithful Mydon, as he turn'd from fight  
His flying coursers, sunk to endless night ; 710  
A broken rock by Nestor's son was thrown ;  
His bended arm received the falling stone,  
From his numb'd hand the ivory-studded reins,  
Dropt in the dust, are trail'd along the plains :  
Meanwhile his temples feel a deadly wound ; 715  
He groans in death, and ponderous sinks to ground :  
Deep drove his helmet in the sands, and there  
The head stood fix'd, the quivering legs in air,  
'Till trampled flat beneath the courser's feet :  
The youthful victor mounts his empty seat, 720  
And bears the prize in triumph to the fleet. }

Great Hector saw, and raging at the view  
Pours on the Greeks ; the Trojan troops pursue :  
He fires his host with animating cries,  
And brings along the Furies of the skies. 725  
Mars, stern destroyer ! and Bellona dread,  
Flame in the front, and thunder at their head :  
This swells the tumult and the rage of fight ;  
That shakes a spear that casts a dreadful light.

Where Hector march'd, the God of battles shin'd,  
Now storm'd before him, and now raged behind. 731

Tydides paused amidst his full career;  
Then first the hero's manly breast knew fear.  
As when some simple swain his cot forsakes;  
And wide through fens an unknown journey takes;  
If chance a swelling brook his passage stay, 736  
And foam impervious cross the wanderer's way,  
Confused he stops, a length of country past,  
Eyes the rough waves, and tired, returns at last.  
Amaz'd no less the great Tydides stands; 740  
He staid, and turning, thus address'd his bands.

No wonder, Greeks! that all to Hector yield—  
Secure of favouring Gods he takes the field;  
His strokes they second, and avert our spears:  
Behold where Mars in mortal arms appears! 745  
Retire then, warriors, but sedate and slow;  
Retire, but with your faces to the foe.  
Trust not too much your unavailing might;  
'Tis not with Troy, but with the Gods ye fight.

Now near the Greeks, the black battalions drew;  
And first two leaders valiant Hector slew: 751

Ver. 735.] Rather, as more accurate:

And through *wide plains* an unknown journey takes. W.

Ver. 742.] This line is intended to concentrate *two* of his author, which run thus:

Friends! how illustrious Hector we admire,  
Fierce with his spear become, and bold in war. W.

Ver. 746.] He might have comprehended his author in equal compass with more fidelity:

Retire, but *on* the foe your faces *turn*,  
Nor 'gainst the Gods with hostile fury burn. W.



His force Anchialus and Mnesthes found,  
In every art of glorious war renown'd ;  
In the same car the chiefs to combat ride,  
And fought united, and united died. 755  
Struck at the sight, the mighty Ajax glows  
With thirst of vengeance, and assaults the foes ;  
His massy spear with matchless fury sent,  
Through Amphius' belt and heaving belly went :  
Amphius Apæsus' happy soil possess'd, 760  
With herds abounding, and with treasure bless'd ;  
But fate resistless from his country led  
The chief to perish at his people's head.  
Shook with his fall his brazen armour rung,  
And fierce, to seize it, conquering Ajax sprung ; 765  
Around his head an iron tempest rain'd ;  
A wood of spears his ample shield sustain'd ;  
Beneath one foot the yet-warm corpse he prest,  
And drew his javelin from the bleeding breast :  
He could no more ; the showering darts denied 770  
To spoil his glittering arms, and plummy pride.  
Now foes on foes came pouring on the fields,  
With bristling lances, and compacted shields ;  
'Till in the steely circle straiten'd round,  
Forced he gives way, and sternly quits the ground.  
While thus they strive, Tlepolemus the great, 776  
Urged by the force of unresisted fate,  
Burns with desire Sarpedon's strength to prove ;  
Alcides' offspring meets the son of Jove.

Ver. 756.] Homer says literally :

Them the great Ajax pitied as they fell. W.

Sheath'd in bright arms each adverse chief came on,  
 Jove's great descendant, and his greater son. 781  
 Prepared for combat, ere the lance he tost,  
 The daring Rhodian vents his haughty boast.

What brings this Lycian counsellor so far,  
 To tremble at our arms, not mix in war? 785  
 Know thy vain self, nor let their flattery move,  
 Who style thee son of cloud-compelling Jove.  
 How far unlike those chiefs of race divine!  
 How vast the difference of their deeds and thine!  
 Jove got such heroes as my sire, whose soul 790  
 No fear could daunt, nor earth, nor hell control.  
 Troy felt his arm, and yon' proud ramparts stand  
 Raised on the ruins of his vengeful hand:  
 With six small ships, and but a slender train,  
 He left the town a wide deserted plain. 795

Ver. 784. *What brings this Lycian counsellor so far.*] There is a particular sarcasm in Tlepolemus's calling Sarpedon in this place Λυκίων Βεληφόρε, Lycian counsellor, one better skilled in oratory than war; as he was the Governor of a people who had long been in peace, and probably (if we may guess from his character in Homer) remarkable for his speeches. This is rightly observed by Spondanus, though not taken notice of by M. Dacier. P.

Ver. 787.] What could induce him not to express his original?

Who style thee son of *ægis-bearing* Jove. W.

Ver. 790.] This couplet is neither pleasing to my taste, nor expressive of Homer's sense. Something like the following I would propose:

Jove's *genuine sons* : *like them*, my sire, whose soul

*Of lion-frame* no terrors could control.

W.

Ver. 792. *Troy felt his arm.*] He alludes to the history of the first destruction of Troy by Hercules, occasioned by Laomedon's refusing that hero the horses, which were the reward promised him for the delivery of his daughter Hesione. P.



But what art thou? who deedless look'st around,  
 While unrevenged thy Lycians bite the ground:  
 Small aid to Troy thy feeble force can be,  
 But wert thou greater, thou must yield to me.  
 Pierced by my spear to endless darkness go! 800  
 I make this present to the shades below.

The son of Hercules, the Rhodian guide,  
 Thus haughty spoke. The Lycian king replied.

Thy sire, O prince! o'erturn'd the Trojan state,  
 Whose perjured monarch well deserved his fate; 805  
 Those heavenly steeds the hero sought so far,  
 False he detained, the just reward of war.  
 Nor so content, the generous chief defied,  
 With base reproaches and unmanly pride.  
 But you, unworthy the high race you boast, 810  
 Shall raise my glory when thy own is lost:  
 Now meet thy fate, and by Sarpedon slain,  
 Add one more ghost to Pluto's gloomy reign.

He said: both javelins at an instant flew;  
 Both struck, both wounded, but Sarpedon's slew:  
 Full in the boaster's neck the weapon stood, 816  
 Transfix'd his throat, and drank the vital blood;

Ver. 807.] This is a mistaken addition of his own. The horses in question were not the reward of *war*, but of the deliverance of Hesione from the monster, according to the *mythologists*.

See also our poet's own note above on verse 792. W.

Ver. 808.] The former clause is not after Homer, but Dacier: "Ce roi parjure ne se contenta pas même de les lui refuser." W.

Ver. 809. *With base reproaches and unmanly pride.*] Methinks these words καὶ ἐνίπαπε μῦθον, include the chief sting of Sarpedon's answer to Tlepolemus, which no commentator that I remember has remarked. He tells him Laomedon deserved his misfortune, not only for his perfidy, but for injuring a brave man with unmanly and

The soul disdainful seeks the caves of night,  
And his seal'd eyes for ever lose the light.

Yet not in vain, 'Tlepolemus, was thrown 820

Thy angry lance ; which piercing to the bone  
Sarpedon's thigh, had robbed the chief of breath,  
But Jove was present, and forbade the death.

Borne from the conflict by his Lycian throng,  
The wounded hero dragg'd the lance along. 825

(His friends, each busied in his several part,  
Through haste, or danger, had not drawn the dart.)

The Greeks, with slain Tlepolemus retir'd ;

Whose fall Ulysses view'd, with fury fir'd ;

Doubtful if Jove's great son he should pursue, 830

Or pour his vengeance on the Lycian crew.

But heaven and fate the first design withstand,

Nor this great death must grace Ulysses' hand.

Minerva drives him on the Lycian train ;

Alastor, Cromius, Halius, strew'd the plain, 835

Alcander, Prytanis, Noëmon fell :

And numbers more his sword had sent to hell,

But Hector saw ; and furious at the sight,

Rush'd terrible amidst the ranks of fight.

With joy Sarpedon view'd the wish'd relief, 840

And faint, lamenting, thus implored the chief.

Oh suffer not the foe to bear away

My helpless corpse, an unassisted prey ;

If I, unblest, must see my son no more,

My much-loved consort, and my native shore, 845

scandalous reproaches ; alluding to those which Tlepolemus had  
just before cast upon him. P.

Ver. 844.] Very slight correction would enable the version



Yet let me die in Ilion's sacred wall ;  
Troy, in whose cause I fell, shall mourn my fall.

He said, nor Hector to the chief replies,  
But shakes his plume, and fierce to combat flies ;  
Swift as a whirlwind, drives the scattering foes ; 850  
And dyes the ground with purple as he goes.

Beneath a beech, Jove's consecrated shade,  
His mournful friends divine Sarpedon laid :  
Brave Pelagon, his favourite chief, was nigh,  
Who wrench'd the javelin from his sinewy thigh.  
The fainting soul stood ready wing'd for flight, 856  
And o'er his eye-balls swam the shades of night ;  
But Boreas rising fresh, with gentle breath,  
Recall'd his spirit from the gates of death.

The generous Greeks recede with tardy pace, 860  
Though Mars and Hector thunder in their face ;

to exhibit the heroism which breathes in the original of this speech :

*Since I, unblest, must see my son no more,  
My much-loved consort, and my native shore,  
I shun not death in Ilion's sacred wall—.*

W.

Ver. 849.] This mode of expressing the customary epithet of Hector, which denotes one with a *variegated* or *waving plume to his helmet*, seems to border on the burlesque. He might have written properly :

But, *rushing forward, to the combat flies :*  
for the comparison of the *whirlwind* is his own.

W.

Ver. 860. *The generous Greeks, &c.*] This slow and orderly retreat of the Greeks, with their front constantly turned to the enemy, is a fine encomium both of their courage and discipline. This manner of retreat was in use among the ancient Lacedæmonians, as were many other martial customs described by Homer. This practice took its rise among that brave people, from the apprehensions of being slain with a wound received in their backs. Such a misfortune was not only attended with the highest infamy, but

None turn their backs to mean ignoble flight,  
 Slow they retreat, and even retreating fight.  
 Who first, who last, by Mars and Hector's hand  
 Stretch'd in their blood, lay gasping on the sand?  
 Teuthras the great, Orestes the renown'd 866  
 For managed steeds, and Trechus, press'd the ground;  
 Next Oenomaus, and Oenops' offspring died;  
 Oresbius last fell groaning at their side:  
 Oresbius, in his painted mitre gay, 870  
 In fat Bœotia held his wealthy sway,  
 Where lakes surround low Hyle's watery plain;  
 A prince and people studious of their gain.

The carnage Juno from the skies survey'd,  
 And touch'd with grief bespoke the blue-eyed maid.  
 Oh sight accurst! Shall faithless Troy prevail, 876  
 And shall our promise to our people fail?  
 How vain the word to Menelaüs given  
 By Jove's great daughter and the queen of Heaven,  
 Beneath his arms that Priam's towers should fall;  
 If warring Gods for ever guard the wall! 881  
 Mars, red with slaughter, aids our hated foes:  
 Haste, let us arm, and force with force oppose!

She spoke: Minerva burns to meet the war:  
 And now heaven's Empress calls her blazing car. 885  
 At her command rush forth the steeds divine;  
 Rich with immortal gold their trappings shine.

they had found a way to punish them who suffered thus, even after their death, by denying them (as Eustathius informs us) the rites of burial. P.

Ver. 862.] The version would be brought nearer to the original thus:



Bright Hebe waits ; by Hebe, ever young,  
 The whirling wheels are to the chariot hung.  
 On the bright axle turns the bidden wheel 890  
 Of sounding brass ; the polish'd axle steel.  
 Eight brazen spokes in radiant order flame ;  
 The circles gold, of uncorrupted frame,  
 Such as the heavens produce : and round the  
                   gold

Two brazen rings of work divine were roll'd. 895  
 The bossy naves of solid silver shone ;  
 Braces of gold suspend the moving throne :  
 The car, behind, an arching figure bore ;  
 The bending concave form'd an arch before.  
 Silver the beam, the' extended yoke was gold, 900  
 And golden reins the' immortal coursers hold.  
 Herself, impatient, to the ready car  
 The coursers joins, and breathes revenge and war.

Pallas disrobes ; her radiant veil untied,  
 With flowers adorn'd, with art diversified, 905  
 (The labour'd veil her heavenly fingers wove)  
 Flows on the pavement of the court of Jove.

*Nor to the ships direct their rapid flight,*

*Nor yet advance ; for Mars was in the fight.* W.

Ver. 897.] Our poet follows Dacier : “ Il est suspendu avec des courroyes d' or et d' argent.” But Ogilby is perfectly exact and happy :

And gold and silver webs expand her seat. W

Ver. 903.] The original literally is :

For strife all eager, and the din of war. W.

Ver. 904. *Pallas disrobes.*] This fiction of Pallas arraying herself with the arms of Jupiter, finely intimates (says Eustathius) that she is nothing else but the wisdom of the Almighty. P.

Now heaven's dread arms her mighty limbs invest,  
 Jove's cuirass blazes on her ample breast ;  
 Deck'd in sad triumph for the mournful field,      910  
 O'er her broad shoulders hangs his horrid shield,  
 Dire, black, tremendous ! Round the margin roll'd,  
 A fringe of serpents hissing guards the gold :  
 Here all the terrors of grim war appear,      914  
 Here rages Force, here trembles Flight and Fear,  
 Here storm'd Contention, and here Fury frown'd,  
 And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.  
 The massy golden helm she next assumes,  
 That dreadful nods with four o'ershading plumes ;  
 So vast, the broad circumference contains      920  
 A hundred armies on a hundred plains.  
 The Goddess thus the' imperial car ascends ;  
 Shook by her arm the mighty javelin bends,

Ver. 910.] Notwithstanding what I have elsewhere observed and proved, that the *ægis* seemed the *breast-plate*, it seems more obvious, and indeed unavoidable, to understand by it the *shield* in this place. In short, there is a degree of confusion, through which I cannot see, in the ancient authors upon this point. I refer the reader to my note on ver. 407 of the *Eumenides* of *Æschylus*. W.

Ver. 913. *A fringe of serpents.*] Our author does not particularly describe this image of the *Ægis*, as consisting of serpents ; but that it did so, may be learned from *Hærodotus* in his fourth book: "The Greeks (says he) borrowed the vest and shield of "Minerva from the Lybians, only with this difference, that the "Lybian shield was fringed with thongs of leather, the Grecian "with serpents." And *Virgil's* description of the same *Ægis* agrees with this, *Æn.* viii. ver. 435. P.

Ver. 917.] *Ogilby* is almost literal :

Amidst, that horrid monster, Gorgon's head,  
 Jove's direst omen, fierce and full of dread.

W.

Ver. 922.] It required no skill to be exact :

The Goddess thus the *flaming* car ascends.

W.



Ponderous and huge; that when her fury burns,  
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns.

Swift at the scourge the' ethereal coursers fly, 926  
While the smooth chariot cuts the liquid sky.

Heaven's gates spontaneous open to the powers,  
Heaven's golden gates, kept by the winged Hours;  
Commission'd in alternate watch they stand, 930

The sun's bright portals and the skies command,  
Involve in clouds the' eternal gates of day,  
Or the dark barrier roll with ease away.

The sounding hinges ring: on either side  
The gloomy volumes, pierced with light, divide. 935

The chariot mounts, where deep in ambient skies,  
Confused, Olympus' hundred heads arise;  
Where far apart the Thunderer fills his throne,  
O'er all the Gods superior and alone.

Ver. 924.] Exactly thus:

Strong, ponderous, huge; with which Jove's daughter tames  
The host of heroes, that her wrath inflames. W.

Ver. 928. *Heaven's gates spontaneous open.*] The expression of *the gates of heaven* is in the Eastern manner, where they said *the gates* of heaven, or of earth, for the *entrance* or *extremities* of heaven or earth; a phrase usual in the scriptures, as is observed by Dacier. P.

Ver. 929. *Heaven's golden gates kept by the winged Hours.*] By the *Hours* here are meant the *seasons*; and so Hobbes translates it, but spoils the sense by what he adds,

Though to the seasons Jove the power gave  
Alone to judge of early and of late;

which is utterly unintelligible, and nothing like Homer's thought. P.

Ver. 932.] Exquisite verses! but his original says simply:

Or to remove the thick cloud, or impose: W.

Ver. 935.] These ideas, with others in this description, are superadded embellishments, but truly poetical, from the luxuriant imagination of our translator. W.

There with her snowy hand the Queen restrains 940  
The fiery steeds, and thus to Jove complains.

O Sire! can no resentment touch thy soul?  
Can Mars rebel, and does no thunder roll?  
What lawless rage on yon' forbidden plain!  
What rash destruction! and what heroes slain! 945  
Venus, and Phœbus with the dreadful bow,  
Smile on the slaughter, and enjoy my woe.  
Mad, furious power! whose unrelenting mind  
No God can govern, and no justice bind.  
Say, mighty father! shall we scourge his pride, 950  
And drive from fight the' impetuous homicide?

To whom assenting, thus the Thunderer said:  
Go! and the great Minerva be thy aid.  
To tame the monster-god Minerva knows,  
And oft' afflicts his brutal breast with woes. 955

He said; Saturnia, ardent to obey,  
Lash'd her white steeds along the' aërial way.  
Swift down the steep of heaven the chariot rolls,  
Between the' expanded earth and starry poles.  
Far as a shepherd, from some point on high, 960  
O'er the wide main extends his boundless eye,

Ver. 954. *To tame the monster-god Minerva knows.*] For it is only *wisdom* that can master *strength*. It is worth while here to observe the conduct of Homer. He makes Minerva, and not Juno, to fight with Mars; because a combat between Mars and Juno could not be supported by any allegory to have authorised the fable: whereas the allegory of a battle between Mars and Minerva is very open and intelligible. Eustathius. P.

Ver. 955.] This is a most wretched line. I should like Ogilby better, thus corrected:

Jove then: *Set on him Pallas: Pallas* knows  
How best to thwart him, and his rage oppose. W.



Through such a space of air, with thundering sound,  
At every leap the' immortal coursers bound :

Troy now they reach'd, and touch'd those banks divine  
Where silver Simois and Scamander join. 965

There Juno stopp'd, and (her fair steeds unloos'd)  
Of air condensed a vapour circumfus'd :

For these, impregnate with celestial dew,  
On Simois' brink ambrosial herbage grew.

Thence to relieve the fainting Argive throng, 970  
Smooth as the sailing doves, they glide along.

The best and bravest of the Grecian band  
(A warlike circle) round Tydides stand :

Such was their look as lions bathed in blood,  
Or foaming boars, the terror of the wood. 975

Heaven's Empress mingles with the mortal crowd,  
And shouts, in Stentor's sounding voice, aloud :

Stentor the strong, endued with brazen lungs,  
Whose throat surpass'd the force of fifty tongues.

Inglorious Argives ! to your race a shame, 980  
And only men in figure and in name !

Ver. 961.] The epithet *boundless* interferes essentially with the drift of the comparison. We might substitute, more conformably to Homer :

O'er the *black ocean's surface* casts his eye. W.

Ver. 978. *Stentor the strong, endued with brazen lungs.*] There was a necessity for cryers whose voices were stronger than ordinary, in those ancient times, before the use of trumpets was known in their armies. And that they were in esteem afterwards, may be seen from Herodotus, where he takes notice that Darius had in his train an Ægyptian, whose voice was louder and stronger than any man's of his age. There is a farther propriety in Homer's attributing this voice to Juno; because Juno is no other than the *air*, and because the *air* is the cause of *sound*. Eustathius, Spondanus. P.

Once from the walls your timorous foes engaged,  
 While fierce in war divine Achilles raged ;  
 Now issuing fearless they possess the plain,  
 Now win the shores, and scarce the seas remain. 985  
 Her speech new fury to their hearts convey'd ;  
 While near Tydides stood the' Athenian maid ;  
 The king beside his panting steeds she found,  
 O'erspent with toil, reposing on the ground :  
 To cool his glowing wound he sat apart, 990  
 (The wound inflicted by the Lycian dart)  
 Large drops of sweat from all his limbs descend,  
 Beneath his ponderous shield his sinews bend,  
 Whose ample belt that o'er his shoulder lay,  
 He eas'd ; and wash'd the clotted gore away. 995  
 The Goddess leaning o'er the bending yoke,  
 Besides his coursers, thus her silence broke.

Degenerate prince ! and not of Tydeus' kind,  
 Whose little body lodged a mighty mind ;  
 Foremost he pressed in glorious toils to share, 1000  
 And scarce refrain'd when I forbade the war.  
 Alone, unguarded, once he dared to go  
 And feast, encircled by the Theban foe ;  
 There braved, and vanquish'd many a hardy knight ;  
 Such nerves I gave him, and such force in fight. 1005  
 Thou too no less hast been my constant care ;  
 Thy hands I arm'd, and sent thee forth to war :

Ver. 984.] Thus, more faithfully to his author :

Now, fearless *of his spear*, they *fill* the plain,

*Fight at your ships* ; and scarce the seas *restrain*. W.

Ver. 1006.] Homer says literally,

I stand by thee too, and protection give ;



But thee or fear deters, or sloth detains ;  
 No drop of all thy father warms thy veins.

The chief thus answer'd mild. Immortal maid !  
 I own thy presence, and confess thy aid. 1011  
 Not fear, thou know'st, withholds me from the  
     plains,

Nor sloth hath seized me, but thy word restrains :  
 From warring Gods thou bad'st me turn my spear,  
 And Venus only found resistance here. 1015

Hence, Goddess ! heedful of thy high commands,  
 Loth I gave way, and warn'd our Argive bands :  
 For Mars, the homicide, these eyes beheld,  
 With slaughter red, and raging round the field.

Then thus Minerva. Brave Tydides, hear ! 1020  
 Not Mars himself, nor aught immortal fear.  
 Full on the God impel thy foaming horse :  
 Pallas commands, and Pallas lends thee force.  
 Rash, furious, blind, from these to those he flies,  
 And every side of wavering combat tries ; 1025  
 Large promise makes, and breaks the promise made ;  
 Now gives the Grecians, now the Trojans aid.

but Dacier: " Je ne fais pas *moins* pour vous que j'ai fait pour  
 " lui." W.

Ver. 1008.] Literally:

Thee, or exhausting toil pervades thy limbs,  
 Or deadening fear has seiz'd:

but Chapman thus:

*Affraid, or slothfull, or else both.* W.

Ver. 1018.] This couplet represents the following verse of  
 Homer:

But Mars, I know, triumphant rules the fight. W.

Ver. 1020.] More exactly thus:

Then *Pallas: Hero! to my soul most dear.* W.

She said, and to the steeds approaching near ;  
 Drew from his seat the martial charioteer.  
 The vigorous Power the trembling car ascends, 1030  
 Fierce for revenge ; and Diomed attends.  
 The groaning axle bent beneath the load ;  
 So great a hero, and so great a God.  
 She snatch'd the reins, she lash'd with all her force,  
 And full on Mars impell'd the foaming horse : 1035  
 But first, to hide her heavenly visage, spread  
 Black Orcus' helmet o'er her radiant head.

Just then gigantick Periphas lay slain,  
 The strongest warrior of the' Ætolian train ;  
 The God, who slew him, leaves his prostrate prize  
 Stretch'd where he fell, and at Tydides flies. 1041

Ver. 1026.] The simplicity of Homer is neglected here ; which is thus exhibited by Mr. Cowper :

He promised Juno lately and myself,  
 That he would fight for Greece, yet now forgets  
 His promise, and gives all his aid to Troy. W.

Ver. 1029.] There is, in my opinion, but little elegance, and certainly not a commendable fidelity, in this translation. My attempt will rather point out the possibility of improvement, than exemplify it.

She said ; and, to the steeds approaching near,  
*Her hand pull'd back* the martial charioteer :  
*The furious Goddess, as the seat he quits,*  
 Ascends the car, and *by Tydides sits*. W.

Ver. 1033. *So great a God.*] The translation has ventured to call a Goddess so ; in imitation of the Greek, which uses the word Θεός promiscuously for either gender. Some of the Latin Poets have not scrupled to do the same. P.

Ver. 1037. *Black Orcus' helmet.*] As every thing that goes into the dark empire of Pluto, or Orcus, disappears and is seen no more : the Greeks from thence borrowed this figurative expression, *to put on Pluto's helmet*, that is to say, *to become invisible*. Plato uses this proverb in the tenth book of his Republick, and Aristophanes in Acharneus. Eustathius. P.



Now rushing fierce, in equal arms appear,  
 The daring Greek ; the dreadful God of war !  
 Full at the chief, above his courser's head,  
 From Mars's arm the' enormous weapon fled ; 1045  
 Pallas opposed her hand, and caused to glance  
 Far from the car, the strong immortal lance.  
 Then threw the force of Tydeus' warlike son ;  
 The javelin hiss'd ; the Goddess urged it on : 1049  
 Where the broad cincture girt his armour round,  
 It pierced the God ; his groin received the wound.  
 From the rent skin the warrior tugs again  
 The smoking steel. Mars bellows with the pain :  
 Loud, as the roar encountering armies yield,  
 When shouting millions shake the thundering field.  
 Both armies start, and trembling gaze around ; 1056  
 And earth and heaven rebellow to the sound.  
 As vapours blown by Auster's sultry breath,  
 Pregnant with plagues, and shedding seeds of death,  
 Beneath the rage of burning Sirius rise, 1060  
 Choke the parch'd earth, and blacken all the  
     skies ;  
 In such a cloud the God from combat driven,  
 High o'er the dusty whirlwind scales the heaven.

Ver. 1052.] This is scarcely Homer's meaning, though the passage be liable to this construction. Hobbes was right :

But Pallas in his belly stuck the spear,

And presently the same pluck'd out again.

And so Mr. Cowper judiciously understood the passage. W.

Ver. 1058.] The genius of our poet has indulged itself in amplifying *two* verses of his original, thus neatly and pregnantly exhibited by Mr. Cowper :

Such as the dimness is, when summer winds

Breathe hot, and sultry mist obscures the sky.

W.

Wild with his pain, he sought the bright abodes,  
 There sullen sat beneath the sire of Gods, 1065  
 Show'd the celestial blood, and with a groan  
 Thus pour'd his plaints before the' immortal throne.

Can Jove, supine, flagitious facts survey,  
 And brook the furies of this daring day?  
 For mortal men celestial powers engage, 1070  
 And Gods on Gods exert eternal rage.  
 From thee, O Father! all these ills we bear,  
 And thy fell daughter with the shield and spear:  
 Thou gav'st that fury to the realms of light,  
 Pernicious, wild, regardless of the right. 1075  
 All heaven beside revere thy sovereign sway,  
 Thy voice we hear, and thy behests obey:  
 'Tis hers to' offend, and even offending share  
 Thy breast, thy counsels, thy distinguish'd care:  
 So boundless she, and thou so partial grown, 1080  
 Well may we deem the wonderous birth thy own.  
 Now frantic Diomed, at her command,  
 Against the' Immortals lifts his raging hand:  
 The heavenly Venus first his fury found,  
 Me next encountering, me he dared to wound; 1085  
 Vanquish'd I fled; even I, the God of fight,  
 From mortal madness scarce was saved by flight.  
 Else had'st thou seen me sink on yonder plain,  
 Heap'd round, and heaving under loads of slain!

Ver. 1062.] Homer is exactly,

Such to Tydides brazen Mars appear'd,  
 Ascending with the clouds to spacious Heaven.

W.

Ver. 1081.] More exactly,

Well may we deem the *noxious* birth thy own.

W.



Or pierced with Grecian darts, for ages lie, 1090  
 Condemn'd to pain, though fated not to die.

Him thus upbraiding, with a wrathful look  
 The lord of thunders view'd, and stern bespoke.  
 To me, perfidious ! this lamenting strain !  
 Of lawless force shall lawless Mars complain ? 1095  
 Of all the Gods who tread the spangled skies,  
 Thou most unjust, most odious in our eyes !  
 Inhuman discord is thy dire delight,  
 The waste of slaughter, and the rage of fight.  
 No bound, no law, thy fiery temper quells, 1100  
 And all thy mother in thy soul rebels.  
 In vain our threats, in vain our power we use ;  
 She gives the' example, and her son pursues.  
 Yet long the' inflicted pangs thou shalt not mourn,  
 Sprung since thou art from Jove, and heavenly born.  
 Else, singed with lightning, had'st thou hence been  
                   thrown, 1106  
 Where chain'd on burning rocks the Titans groan.  
 Thus he who shakes Olympus with his nod ;  
 Then gave to Pæon's care the bleeding God.

Ver. 1091. *Condemn'd to pain, though fated not to die.*] Those are mistaken who imagine our author represents his Gods as mortal. He only represents the inferior or corporeal Deities as capable of pains and punishments, during the will of Jupiter, which is not inconsistent with true theology. If Mars is said in Dione's speech to Venus to have been near *perishing* by Otus and Ephialtes, it means no more than lasting misery, such as Jupiter threatens him with when he speaks of precipitating him into Tartarus. Homer takes care to tell us both of this God and of Pluto, when Pæon cured them, that they were not mortal. P.

Ver. 1106.] Homer only says,

Else hadst thou been ere this beneath the gods :  
 or, as Mr. Cowper more elegantly renders :

Thou shouldst have found long since an humbler sphere. W.

With gentle hand the balm he pour'd around, 1110  
 And heal'd the' immortal flesh, and closed the wound.  
 As when the fig's prest juice, infused in cream,  
 To curd coagulates the liquid stream,

Ver. 1112. *As when the fig's prest juice, &c.*] The sudden operation of the remedy administered by Pæon, is well expressed by this similitude. It is necessary just to take notice, that they anciently made use of the juice or sap of a fig for runnet, to cause their milk to coagulate. It may not be amiss to observe, that Homer is not very delicate in the choice of his allusions. He often borrowed his similies from low life, and provided they illustrated his thoughts in a just and lively manner, it was all he had regard to.

The allegory of this whole book lies so open, is carried on with such closeness, and wound up with so much fulness and strength, that it is a wonder how it could enter into the imagination of any critic, that these actions of Diomed were only a daring and extravagant fiction in Homer, as if he affected the *marvellous* at any rate. The great moral of it is, that a brave man should not contend against Heaven, but resist only Venus and Mars, incontinence and ungoverned fury. Diomed is proposed as an example of a great and enterprising nature, which would perpetually be venturing too far, and committing extravagances or impieties, did it not suffer itself to be checked and guided by Minerva or prudence: for it is this *wisdom* (as we are told in the very first lines of the book) that raises a hero above all others. Nothing is more observable than the particular care Homer has taken to show he designed this moral. He never omits any occasion throughout the book, to put it in express terms into the mouths of the Gods, or persons of the greatest weight. Minerva, at the beginning of the battle, is made to give this precept to Diomed; *Fight not against the Gods, but give way to them, and resist only Venus*. The same Goddess opens his eyes, and enlightens him so far as to perceive when it is Heaven that acts immediately against him, or when it is man only that opposes him. The hero himself, as soon as he has performed her dictates in driving away Venus, cries out, not as to the Goddess, but as to the passion, *Thou hast no business with warriors, is it not enough that thou deceivest weak women?* Even the mother of Venus, while she comforts her daughter, bears testimony to the moral: *That man* (says she) *is not long-lived who contends with the Gods*. And when Diomed, transported by his nature, proceeds but a step too far, Apollo discovers himself in the most solemn manner, and declares



Sudden the fluids fix, the parts combin'd;  
Such, and so soon, the' ethereal texture join'd. 1115  
Cleansed from the dust and gore, fair Hebè drest  
His mighty limbs in an immortal vest.  
Glorious he sat, in majesty restor'd,  
Fast by the throne of Heaven's superior lord.  
Juno and Pallas mount the blest abodes, 1120  
Their task perform'd, and mix among the Gods.

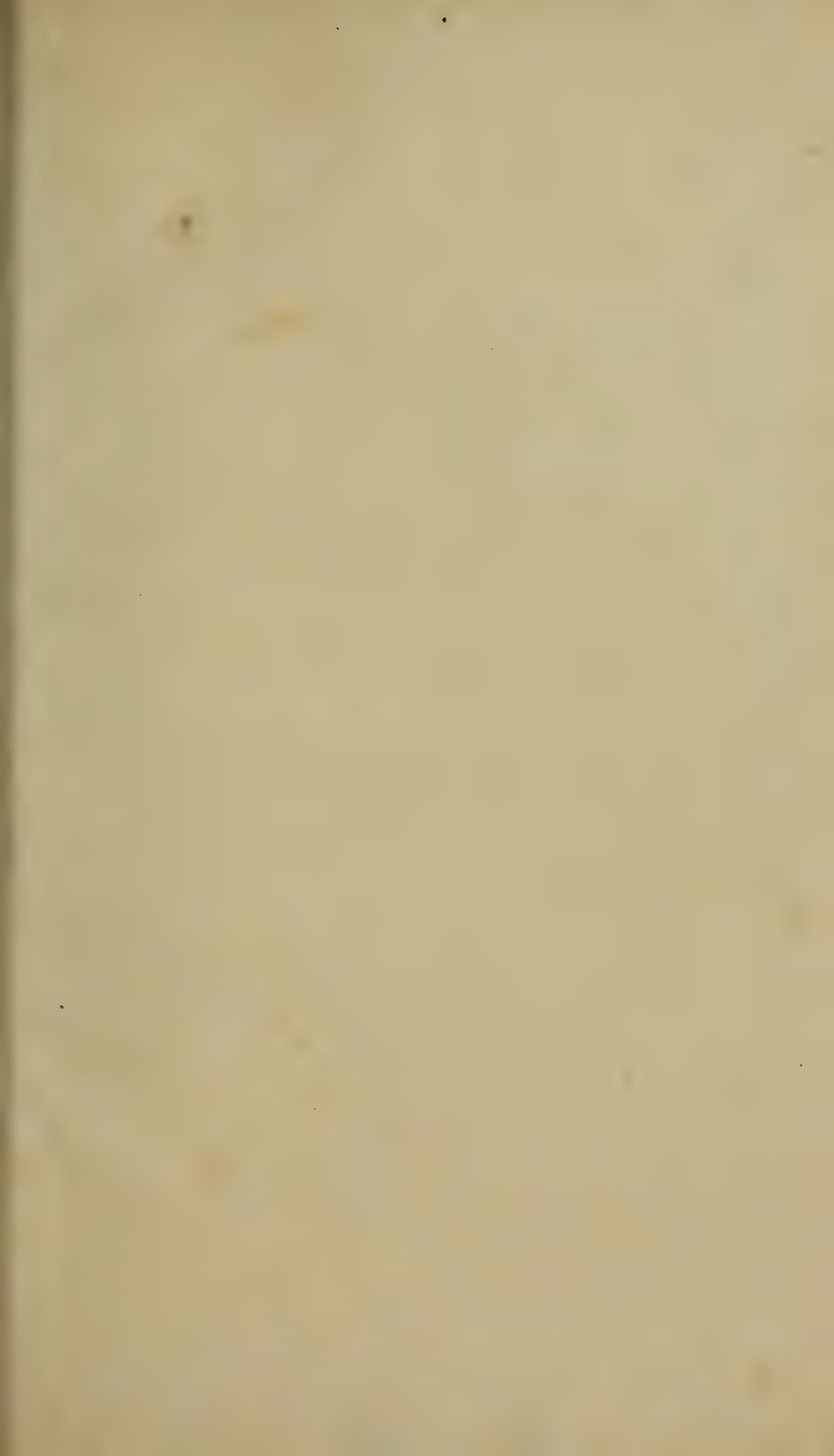
this truth in his own voice, as it were by direct revelation: *Mortal, forbear ! consider, and know the vast difference there is between the Gods and thee. They are immortal and divine, but man a miserable reptile of the dust.* P.

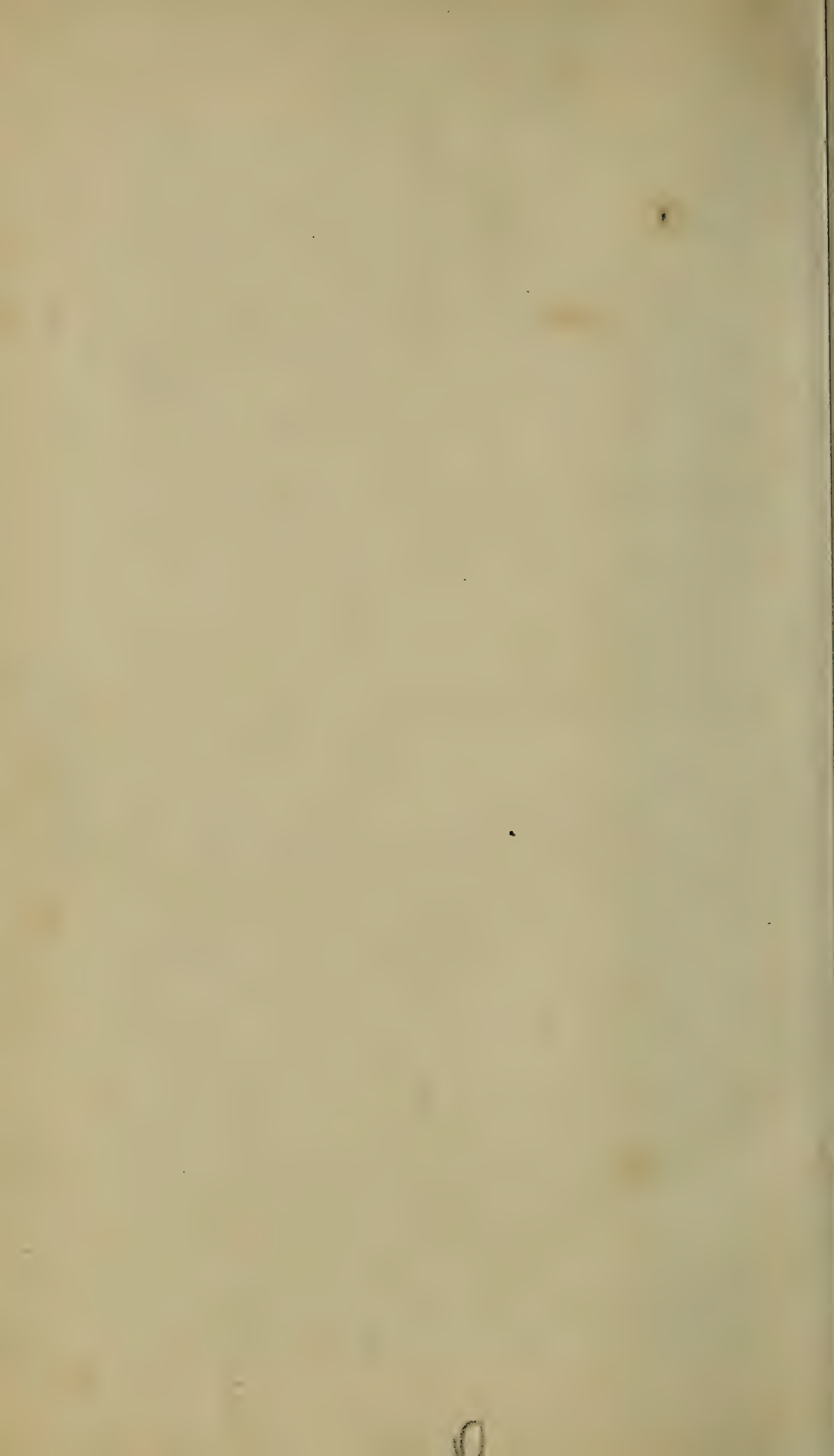
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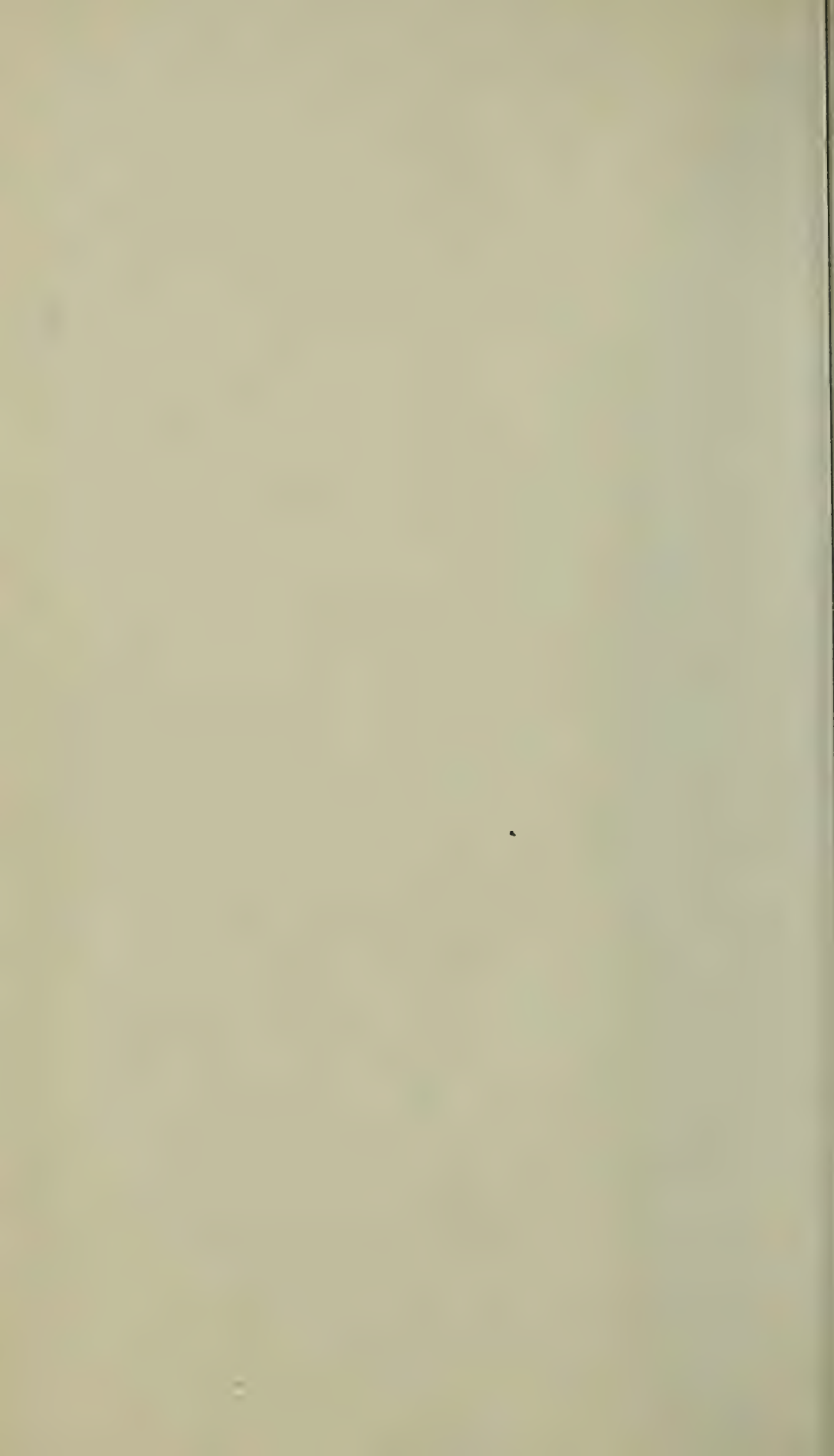






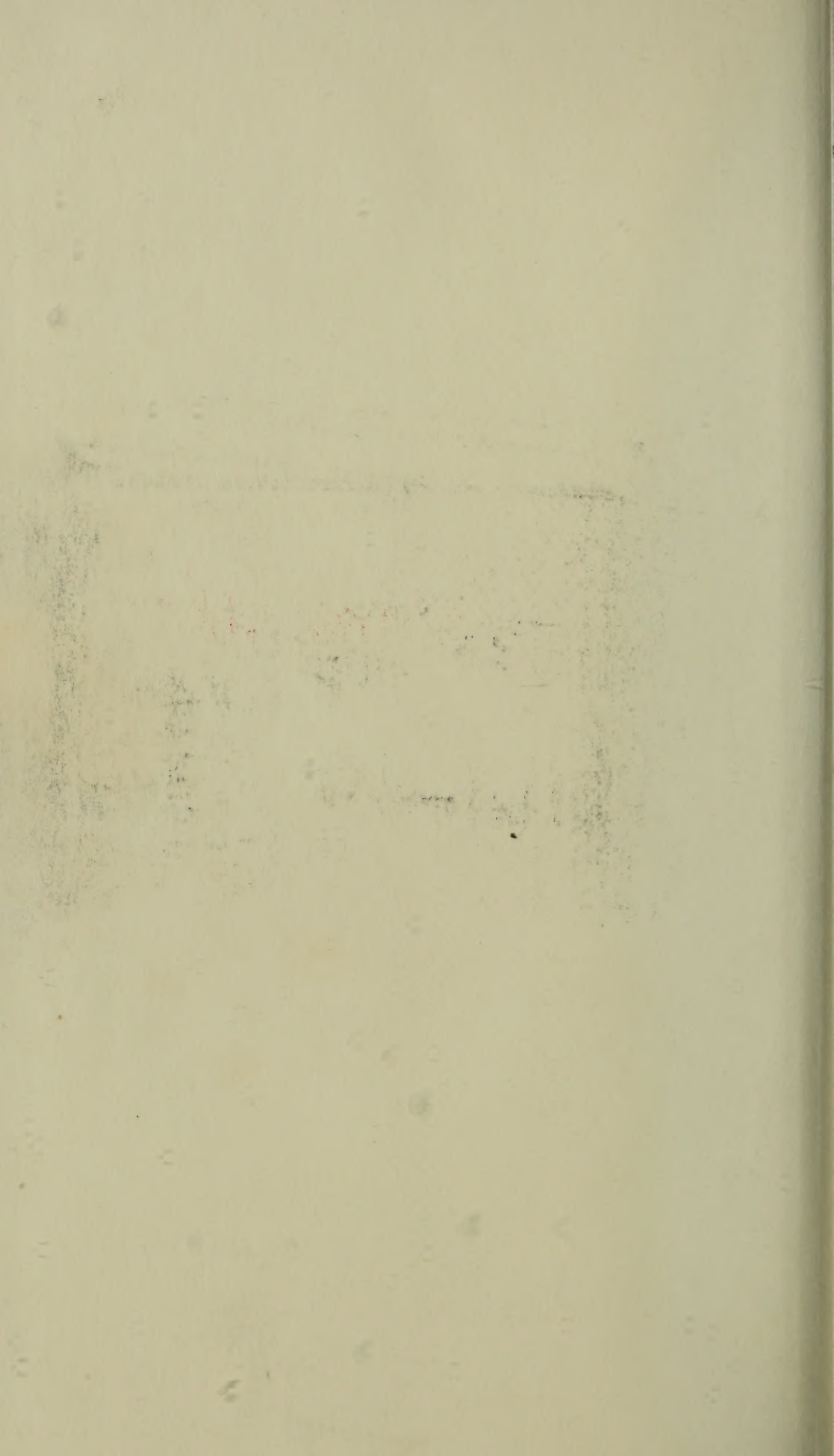














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